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WESLEY ON PERFECTION

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Wesley, John
1703-1791

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION,

AS TAUGHT BY

JOHN WESLEY.

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COMPILED BY

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Author of "Perfect Love" and "Purity and Maturity."

INTRODUCTION BY BISHOP W. F. MALLALIEU.

"PURE LOVE, REIGNING ALONE IN THE HEART AND LIFE, THIS IS THE WHOLE OF SCRIPTURAL PERFECTION." — *Wesley.*

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TO THE

MINISTRY AND MEMBERSHIP

OF THE

VARIOUS BRANCHES OF THE METHODIST CHURCH,

THIS VOLUME

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

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PREFACE.

In this book Mr. Wesley is made to speak for himself on the subject of Christian Perfection; as, in its preparation, all that he left on the subject, in his various works and elsewhere, has been carefully examined, and everything of any special interest, or at all pertinent to the doctrine and experience, has been collected and classified in thirty sections; and each quotation verified for examination if desired. In this classified, convenient form, may be found substantially all of his teachings, respecting this the central doctrine of Christianity.

During more than a century, John Wesley has been growing in the esteem of mankind, until now, among all Christians — Episcopalians, Dissenters, and Protestants of all names, — he is regarded as one of the most remarkable religious reformers in modern times. Those who desire to know his views on any aspect of the subject of Christian Perfection can turn to this volume, and at once find all that is now available from him regarding it. Within these pages are garnered many precious truths for the edification of those interested in Scriptural holiness as taught by John Wesley.

JOHN A. WOOD.

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INTRODUCTION.

JOHN WESLEY, under God the founder of Methodism, to-day touches the world with mightier power than ever in the past. His followers stand in the front ranks of the militant church. They have already astonished Christendom by their tireless energy and their aggressive spirit. The world expects great things of Methodism.

The Gospel as preached by Wesley and those who imitate him, appeals with peculiar force to the intelligent common-sense of all unconverted men. All such men feel that under the circumstances and conditions of human life, it was incumbent upon God to make salvation possible to every soul. It has been the mission of Methodism to destroy the unreasonable and illogical and unscriptural dogmas of Calvanistic fatalism, and show how God could be just and yet the justifier of every believing soul that in real penitence accepts the Lord Jesus Christ; and, also, how God can save all infants and irresponsible persons, and how in every nation all who fear God and work righteousness, though they have never heard the Gospel, are accepted by Him. These fundamental truths as set forth by John Wesley, have never failed to commend themselves to the favor-

able consideration of all unprejudiced minds, for they at once glorify the Divine justice and compassion, and throw wide open the door of hope to every soul. But Wesley was thorough and exhaustive in his treatment of whatever was the subject of his investigations. For many long and weary years he groped in the thick darkness of the times in which he lived, seeking for the simplest experience of salvation. He abounded in all manner of self-denials and self-sacrifices; his morality was of the most exalted character; he was dilligent in prayer and in the study of God's word; he was most strict in all the outward forms and services of religion; but until he reached his thirty-fifth year he had not attained the consciousness of pardon in his own soul; he could not testify that God for Christ's sake had forgiven him his sins. From that auspicious and ever-memorable, as well as glorious hour, when, listening to the reading of Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, he felt his heart strangely warmed with the love of God, and knew himself to be a pardoned sinner, he went straight forward as the Spirit of God directed his steps, till he came to the experience of perfect love in his own soul.

It is to be especially noted that Wesley never quarrelled about names. Sanctification, holiness, perfection, were often used by him to express the experience in the Divine life, attainable by all Christians previous to the hour of death; but he was more inclined to speak of the experience as the perfection of love, including love to God and love to man, and involving, at the same time, deliverance from the power, the guilt, and the pollution of sin.

Of two things we may rest assured. The first is that Wesley taught the possibility of this experience, and that it was to be reached by meditation, study, conviction of need, desire, consecration and faith. The second is that he leaves no room for doubt that he professed to have the experience, and that he preached the doctrine of Christian perfection and exhorted and encouraged his followers to seek it.

No one will study Wesley without discovering that he makes a distinction between regeneration and sanctification, or Christian perfection. He teaches that the work is wrought instantaneously, though it may be approached by slow and gradual steps; he denies the possibility of remaining in a justified and regenerate state while guilty of known sin; he teaches that this experience of perfect love pre-eminently favors the growth of all Christian graces; he avoids most carefully, and condemns most emphatically, all fanaticism and spiritual pride and foolishness, and shows how easily the experience may be lost; he studies his own heart, and watches with the most critical attention the professions and lives of those who assumed to have found the experience of entire sanctification, and compares all with the teachings of the Word of God: so that we have in "Wesley's Plain Account of Christian Perfection," and in his frequent allusions to the subject in his journals and sermons, the summation of all that is essential to the fullest and clearest understanding of this whole subject.

It is with the greatest satisfaction that I give my approval to the present compilation of all that Wesley has taught concerning the all-important subject of

Christian perfection. Surely there never, as now, was a time when the followers of Christ, of every name, and when, especially, all Methodists, should give their attention to the study of the scope and glorious nature of their privileges in this present dispensation of the Holy Ghost. We seem to stand on advanced ground, and such doors of opportunity are opened to the people of God, as never before in all the centuries of the past. All appliances, all facilities, are ours, and may be sanctified and utilized for the salvation of the world. But the great imperative, now is, that the professing disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ should rise up out of the ordinary and usual experience of vacillation, of backsliding, yes, of justification and regeneration, and leaving all that is past, as Paul exhorts should be done, commence "to go on unto perfection," commence "to expect to be made perfect in love in this life," commence "to earnestly strive after it," and if need be, strive with groanings, and tears, and self-abasement, and agonizing supplications, until the experience of perfect love is realized, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost fills every heart with zeal, and crowns every head with lambent flames, and makes every tongue eloquent in testifying to the grace of God that saves to the uttermost. Surely it will help to the realization of these most desirable results, if once more we turn to the study of Wesley and the Word of God.

W. F. MALLALIEU

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CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

SECTION I.

HOW MR. WESLEY WAS LED INTO THE LIGHT OF FULL SALVATION.

"But how came this opinion into my mind? I will tell you with all simplicity. In 1725 I met with Bishop Taylor's 'Rules of Holy Living and Dying.' I was struck particularly with the chapter upon *intention*, and felt a fixed intention 'to give myself up to God.' In this I was much confirmed soon after by the 'Christian Pattern,' and longed to give God all my heart. This is just what I mean by perfection now: I sought after it from that hour."—*Journal*, May, 1765.

Mr. Wesley was then in his twenty-third year, and Bishop Taylor was an eminent prelate in the English Episcopal Church.

"In the following year (1726) I met with Kempis' 'Christian Pattern.' The nature and extent of inward religion, the religion of the heart, now appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before."

Thomas a Kempis was an Augustine monk, distinguished for his apostolic simplicity and purity. His "Christian Pattern" has been translated into all mod-

ern languages, and published in more than a thousand editions.

"In 1727, I read Mr. Law's 'Christian Perfection,' and 'Serious Call,' and more explicitly resolved to be all devoted to God, in body, soul, and spirit. In 1730 I began to be *homo unius libri;** to study (comparatively) no book but the Bible. I then saw, in a stronger light than ever before, that only one thing is needful, even faith that worketh by the love of God and man, all inward and outward holiness; and I groaned to love God with all my heart, and to serve Him with all my strength.

"January 1, 1733, I preached the sermon on the 'Circumcision of the heart'; which contains all that I now teach concerning salvation from all sin, and loving God with an undivided heart. In the same year I printed (the first time I ventured to print anything) for the use of my pupils, 'A Collection of Forms of Prayer;' and in this I spoke explicitly of giving 'the whole heart and the whole life to God.' This was then, as it is now, my idea of perfection, though I should have started at the word.

"In 1735, I preached my farewell sermon at Epworth, in Lincolnshire. In this, likewise, I spoke with the utmost clearness of having one design, one desire, one love, and of pursuing the one end of our life in all our words and actions.

"In January, 1738, I expressed my desire in these words: —

O grant that nothing in my soul
May dwell but thy pure love alone!
O may thy love possess me whole,
My joy, my treasure, and my crown!
Strange flames far from my heart remove,
My every act, word, thought be love!

* A man of one book.

"And I am still persuaded this is what the Lord Jesus hath bought for me with His own blood.

"Now, whether you desire and expect this blessing or not, is it not an astonishing thing that you, or any man living, should be disgusted at me for expecting it; and that they should persuade one another, that this hope is 'subversive of the very foundations of Christian experience?' Why then, whoever retains it cannot possibly have any Christian experience at all. Then, my brother, Mr. Fletcher, and I, and twenty thousand more, who seem both to love and fear God, are, in reality, children of the devil, and in the road to eternal damnation." — *Journal*, May, 1765.

"Many years since, I saw that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. I began by following after it and inciting all with whom I had any intercourse to do the same. Ten years after, God gave me a clearer view than I had before of the way how to attain it, namely, by faith in the Son of God. And immediately *I declared* to all, '*We are saved from sin, we are made holy by faith.*' This *I testified in private*, in *public*, in *print*, and God confirmed it by *a thousand witnesses.*" — Vol. vii. p. 38.

This was written in 1771. In 1744, nearly thirty years before, he wrote: —

"In the evening, while I was reading prayers at Snowsfield, I found such light and strength as I never remember to have had before. I saw every thought as well as action or word, just as it was rising in my heart, and whether it was right before God, or tainted with pride or selfishness.

"I waked the next morning, by the grace of God, in the same spirit; and about eight, being with two or three that believed in Jesus, I felt such an awe, and tender sense of the presence of God, as *greatly confirmed me therein;* so that God was before me all day long. I sought and found

Him in every place; and could truly say, when I lay down at night, '*now I have lived a day.*'" — *Journal,* Dec., 1744.

These paragraphs contain the substance which Mr. Wesley left in writing regarding his experience of full salvation. He seldom recorded his personal religious experience in his Journals, and yet we have as much regarding his experience of sanctification as of justification. The most he says about his justification, was that at Aldersgate he felt "his heart strangely warmed." This is often quoted respecting his justification, while the foregoing statements are both as *clear* and as *definite* respecting his sanctification. There is just as much propriety, in the light of his Journals, in asserting that he did not claim to be justified, as that he did not claim to be sanctified.

His whole life and work, during a long and useful ministry, teach more positively than any words of his, that his consecration and faith received a Divine response in the blessed experience which he insisted upon in others, and into which he led so many thousands of his hearers. There is no reason for believing that John Wesley sent his people ahead of himself, or that he led them into richer fields of light, sweetness, and love, than he himself enjoyed.

SECTION II.

THE NATURE OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

In 1733, when Mr. Wesley was thirty years of age, he preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, before the University, his sermon on the "Circumcision of the heart," in which he said: —

"The circumcision of the heart is that habitual disposition of soul, which, in the sacred writings, is termed holiness; and which directly implies the being cleansed from sin, from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit; and by consequence, the being endued with those virtues which were also in Christ Jesus; the being so renewed in the image of our mind, as to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect."

Thirty-two years after, in 1765, he says: —

"This sermon contained all that I now teach concerning salvation from all sin, and loving God with an undivided heart." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 147.

"I believe it to be an inward thing, namely, the life of God in the soul of man; a participation of the Divine nature; the mind that was in Christ; or, the renewal of our heart, after the image of Him that created us." — *Journal*, Sept., 1739.

"What is, then, the perfection of which man is capable, while he dwells in a corruptible body? It is the complying with that kind command: 'My son, give Me thy heart.'

It is the 'loving the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind.' This is the sum of Christian perfection: it is all comprised in that one word, love. The first branch of it is the love of God: and as he that loves God loves his brother also, it is inseparably connected with the second: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;' Thou shalt love every man as thy own soul, as Christ loved us. 'On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets;' these contain the whole of Christian perfection." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 168.

His sermon on "Christian Perfection" was written in 1741. Mr. Wesley says: —

"I think it was the latter end of the year 1740, that I had a conversation with Dr. Gibson, then Bishop of London, at Whitehall. He asked me what I meant by perfection. I told him without any disguise or reserve. When I ceased speaking, he said: 'Mr. Wesley, if this be all you mean, publish it to all the world.' I answered, 'My lord, I will'; and accordingly wrote and published the sermon on 'Christian Perfection.'

Letter to the Bishop of London: —

"What, it may be asked, do you mean by 'one that is perfect,' or, 'one that is as his Master?' We mean one in whom is, 'the mind which was in Christ,' and who so 'walketh as He walked;' a man that 'hath clean hands and a pure heart;' or that is 'cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit;' one 'in whom their is no occasion of stumbling,' and who, accordingly, 'doth not commit sin.' To declare this a little more particularly: We understand by that Scriptural expression, 'a perfect man,' one in whom God hath fulfilled His faithful word: 'From all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. I will also save you from all your uncleanness.' We understand, hereby,

one whom God hath sanctified throughout, even in 'body, soul, and spirit;' one who 'walketh in the light, as He is in the light,' in whom 'is no darkness at all; the blood of Jesus Christ His Son' having 'cleansed him from all sin.'

"This man can now testify to all mankind, 'I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet I live not, but Christ liveth in me.' He 'is holy, as God who called him is holy,' both in life, and 'in all manner of conversation.' He 'loveth the Lord his God with all his heart, and serveth Him with all his strength. He 'loveth his neighbor' (every man) 'as himself;' yea, 'as Christ loved us;' them in particular that 'despitefully use him and persecute him,' because 'they know not the Son, neither the Father.' Indeed, his soul is all love, filled with 'bowels of mercies, kindness, meekness, gentleness, long suffering.' And his life agreeth thereto, full of 'the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labor of love.' And 'whatsoever he doeth, either in word or deed,' he doeth 'it all in the name, in the love and power, of the Lord Jesus.' In a word, he doeth the will of God 'on earth, as it is done in Heaven.'

"This is to be 'a perfect man,' to be 'sanctified throughout, created anew in Jesus Christ;' even 'to have a heart so all-flaming with the love of God' (to use Archbishop Usher's words), 'as continually to offer up every thought, word, and work, as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable unto God though Christ.' In every thought of our hearts, in every word of our tongues, in every work of our hands, 'to show forth His praise who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.' Oh, that both we, and all who seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity, may thus 'be made perfect in one!'" — *Works*, vol. v. p. 342.

"By salvation, I mean, not barely, according to the vulgar notion, — deliverance from hell, or going to heaven; but a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its

primitive health, its original purity; a recovery of the Divine nature; the renewal of our soul after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy, and truth. This implies all holy and heavenly tempers, and by consequence, all holiness of conversation." — Written in 1744, *Works*, vol. v. p. 35.

Tyerman says, in his "Life of Wesley," that at the first conference, in 1744, Christian perfection was defined: —

"A renewal in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. To be a *perfect Christian* is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, implying the destruction of all inward sin; and faith is the condition and instrument by which such a state of grace is obtained." — *Tyerman*, vol. i. p. 444.

To Dr. Dodd, in 1756: —

"When I began to make the Scriptures my study (about seven and twenty years ago), I began to see that Christians are called to *love God with all their heart*, and to *serve Him with all their strength*, which is precisely what I apprehend to be meant by the Scriptural term '*perfection.*' After weighing this for some years, I openly declared my sentiments before the University, in the sermon on '*The circumcision of the heart.*' About six years after, in consequence of an advice I received from Bishop Gibson, 'Tell all the world what you mean by perfection,' I published my coolest and latest thoughts in the sermon on that subject. I therein build on no authority, ancient or modern, but the Scripture." — *Methodist Magazine*, 1779, p. 434.

To Miss Hain, in 1758: —

"The doctrine of perfection, you say, has perplexed you much, since some of our preachers have placed it in so

dreadful a light; one of them affirming, 'A believer, till perfect, is under the curse of God, and in a state of damnation.' Another, 'If you die before you have attained it, you will surely perish.'

"By *perfection*, I mean *perfect love*, or the loving God with all our heart, so as to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks. I am convinced every believer may attain this; yet I do not say he is in a state of damnation, or under the curse of God, till he does attain. No; he is in a state of grace, and in favor with God, as long as he believes. Neither would I say, 'If you die without it, you will perish;' but rather, 'Till you are saved from unholy tempers, you are not ripe for glory. There will, therefore, more promises be fulfilled in your soul before God takes you to himself.'

"'But none can attain perfection unless they first believe it attainable.' Neither do I affirm this. I knew a Calvinist in London, who never believed it attainable, till the moment she did attain it; and then lay declaring it aloud for many days, till her spirit returned to God." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 732.

To Miss Furly, in 1762: —

"Certainly sanctification (in the proper sense) is 'an instantaneous deliverance from all sin'; and includes 'an instantaneous power then given, always to cleave to God.' Yet this sanctification (at least, in the lower degrees) does not include a power never to think a useless thought, nor ever speak a useless word. I, myself, believe that such a perfection is inconsistent with living in a corruptible body: for this makes it impossible 'always to think right.' While we breathe, we shall, more or less, mistake. If, therefore, Christian perfection implies this, we must not expect it till after death.

"I want you to be all love. This is the perfection I believe

and teach. And this perfection is consistent with a thousand nervous disorders, which that high-strained perfection is not. Indeed, my judgment is, that (in this case particularly) to overdo is to undo; and that to set perfection too high (so high as no man that we ever heard or read of attained) is the most effectual (because unsuspected) way of driving it out of the world." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 718.

To Mrs. Maitland: —

"As to the word *perfection*, it is Scriptural; therefore, neither you nor I can in conscience object to it, unless we would send the Holy Ghost to school, and teach Him to speak who made the tongue.

"By Christian perfection, I mean (as I have said again and again) the so loving God and our neighbor as to 'rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks.' He that experiences this is Scripturally perfect. And if you do not, yet you may experience it; you surely will, if you follow hard after it, for the Scripture cannot be broken.

"What then does their arguing reprove, who object against Christian perfection? Absolute or infallible perfection I never contended for. Sinless perfection I do not contend for, seeing it is not Scriptural. A perfection, such as enables a person to fulfil the whole law, and so needs not the merits of Christ, — I acknowledge no such perfection; I do now, and always did, protest against it.

"'But is there no sin in those who are perfect in love?' I believe not; but be that as it may, they feel none, — no temper contrary to pure love, — while they rejoice, pray, and give thanks continually. And whether sin is suspended, or extinguished, I will not dispute; it is enough that they feel nothing but love. This, you allow, we should daily press after. And this is all I contend for." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 752.

To Miss H., in 1758: —

"Were you to ask, 'What if I should die this moment?' I should answer, 'I believe you would be saved; because I am persuaded, none that has faith can die before he is made ripe for glory.' This is the doctrine which I continually teach, which has nothing to do with justification by works. Nor can it discourage any who have faith, neither weaken their peace, nor damp their joy in the Lord. True believers are not distressed hereby, either in life or in death; unless in some rare instance, wherein the temptation of the devil is joined with a melancholy temper.

"Upon the whole, I observe your great argument turns all along on a mistake of the doctrine. Whatever warm expressions may drop from young men, we do not teach that any believer is under condemnation. So that all the inferences drawn from this supposition fall to the ground at once." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 733.

Soon after the Bell and Maxwell fanaticism of 1762–3, which somewhat changed Charles Wesley's views on the subject for a time, Mr. Wesley wrote to him the following: —

"1. By perfection, I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and man, ruling all the tempers, words, and actions, the whole heart, and the whole life.

I do not include an impossibility of falling from it, either in part, or in whole. Therefore, I retract several expressions in our hymns, which partly express, partly imply, such an impossibility. And I do not contend for the term *sinless*, though I do not object against it. Do we agree or differ here? If we differ, wherein?

"2. As to manner, I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by faith, by a simple act of faith; consequently, in an instant. But I believe a gradual work, both

preceding and following that instant. Do we agree or differ here?

"3. As to the time, I believe this instant generally is the instant of death, the moment before the soul leaves the body. But I believe it may be ten, twenty, or forty years before death. Do we agree or differ here?

"I believe it is usually many years after justification, but that it *may be* within five years, or five months after it. I know no conclusive argument to the contrary. Do you?

"If it *must* be many years after justification, I would be glad to know how many. And how many days, or months, or even years, can you allow to be between perfection and death? How far from justification *must* it be? and how near to death?" — *Jackson's Life of Charles Wesley*, vol. ii. p. 210.

"But what is the perfection here spoken of? It is not only a deliverance from doubts and fears, but from sin; from all inward, as well as outward sin; from evil desires, and evil tempers, as well as from evil words and works. Yea, and it is not only a negative blessing, a deliverance from all evil dispositions, implied in that expression, 'I will cirsumcise thy heart'; but a positive one likewise; even the planting all good dispositions in their place; clearly implied in that expression, 'To love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul.'" — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 410.

"The pure in heart,' are those whose hearts God hath purified even as He is pure'; who are purified through faith in the blood of Jesus, from every unholy affection; who, being cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfect holiness in the (loving) fear of God.' They are, through the power of His grace, purified from pride, by the deepest poverty of spirit; from anger, from every unkind or turbulent passion, by meekness and gentleness; from every desire but to please and enjoy God, to know and love Him more

and more, by that hunger and thirst after righteousness, which now engrosses their whole soul; so that now they love the Lord their God with all their heart, and with all their soul, and mind, and strength." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 199.

To the Countess of Huntingdon, in 1763: —

"The loving God with all our heart, soul, and strength, and the loving all men as Christ loved us, is, and ever was, *for these thirty years*, the sum of what I deliver, as pure religion and undefiled." — *Life of Countess of Huntingdon*, vol. i. p. 329.

To the Rev. Mr. Venn, in 1765: —

"What I want is, holiness of heart and life. They who have this are my brother, sister, and mother.

"'But you hold perfection.' True; that is, loving God with all our heart, and serving Him with all our strength. I teach nothing more, nothing less, than this. And whatever infirmity, defect, *anomia*, is consistent with this, any man may teach, and I shall not contradict him." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 304.

"But what is it you are angry at? What is it you object to? Let us understand the question before we dispute about it.

"By Christian perfection, I mean, 1. Loving God with all our heart. Do you object to this? I mean, 2. A heart and life all devoted to God. Do you desire less? I mean, 3. Regaining the whole image of God. What objection to this? I mean, 4. Having all the mind that was in Christ. Is this going too far? I mean, 5. Walking uniformly as Christ walked. And this surely no Christian will object to. If any one means anything more, or anything else, by perfection, I have no concern with it." — *Journal*, June, 1769.

To Mr. S., in 1770: —

"I had once the opportunity of speaking a few minutes to you on the head of Christian perfection; and I believe you had not much objection to anything which was then spoken. When I spoke nearly to the same effect to one of the late bishops of London, Bishop Gibson, he said earnestly, 'Why, Mr. Wesley, if this is what you mean by perfection, who can be against it?' I believe verily, there would need no more than a single hour, spent in free and open conversation, to convince you that none can rationally or Scripturally say anything against the perfection I have preached for thirty years." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 747.

To Mr. W. Churchey, in 1771: —

"Entire sanctification, or Christian perfection, is neither more nor less than pure love; love expelling sin, and governing both the heart and life of a child of God." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 82.

"Christian perfection does not imply (as some men seem to have imagined) an exemption either from ignorance, or mistake, or infirmities, or temptations. Indeed, it is only another term for holiness. They are two names for the same thing. Thus, every one that is holy, is, in the Scripture sense, perfect. Yet we may observe, that neither in this respect is there any absolute perfection on earth. There is no *perfection of degrees*, as it is termed; none which does not admit of a continual increase. So that how much soever any man has attained, or how high a degree soever he is perfect, he hath still need 'to grow in grace,' and daily to advance in the knowledge and love of God his Saviour." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 358.

"Well, but what more than this can be implied in entire sanctification? It does not imply any new kind of holiness: let no man imagine this. From the moment we are justified till we give up our spirits to God, love is the fulfilling of the

law, of the whole evangelical law, which took place of the Adamic law when the first promise of 'the seed of the woman' was made. Love is the sum of Christian sanctification; it is the one *kind* of holiness which is found only in various *degrees*, in the believers who are distinguished by St. John into 'little children, young men, and fathers.' The difference between one and the other properly lies in the degree of love. And herein there is as great a difference in the spiritual, as in the natural sense, between fathers, young men, and babes." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 221.

"And all this, with abundantly more than this, is contained in that single expression, 'the loving God with all our heart, and serving Him with all our strength.' Nor did I ever say or mean any more by perfection, than thus loving and serving God. But I dare not say less than this; for it might be attended with worse consequences than you seem to be aware of. If there be a mistake, it is far more dangerous on the one side than on the other. If I set the mark too high, I drive men into needless fears; if you set it too low, you drive them into hell fire." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 535.

"Thus you experience, that He whose name is called JESUS, does not bear that name in vain: that He does, in fact, 'save His people from their sins;' the root, as well as the branches. And this salvation from sin, from all sin, is another description of perfection, though indeed it expresses only the least, the lowest branch of it, only the negative part of the great salvation." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 170.

"But surely we cannot be saved from sin, while we dwell in a *sinful body*." A *sinful body?* I pray observe, how deeply ambiguous, how equivocal, this expression is! But there is no authority for it in Scripture: the word, *sinful body*, is never found there. And as it is totally unscriptural, so it is palpably absurd. For no *body*, or matter of any

kind, can be *sinful;* spirits alone are capable of sin. Pray in what part of the body should sin lodge? It cannot lodge in the skin, nor in the muscles, or nerves, or veins, or arteries; it cannot be in the bones any more than in the hair or nails. Only the soul can be the seat of sin." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 172.

It will be noticed in these expositions and statements of Mr. Wesley, given during forty years of his ministry, that he used the terms "perfection," "Christian perfection," "sanctification," "entire sanctification," "perfect love," and "holiness," interchangeably, and as synonomous; implying the same gracious state of deliverance from all sin, and love to God with all the heart.

SECTION III.

REGENERATION AND ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION NOT IDENTICAL.

"*Monday*, 28. — I retired to Lewisham, and wrote the sermon on 'Sin in Believers,' in order to to remove a mistake which some were laboring to propagate, — that there is no sin in any that are justified." — *Journal*, April, 1762.

"Is there then sin in him that is in Christ? Does sin *remain* in one that believes in Him? Is there any sin in them that are born of God, or are they wholly delivered from it? Let no one imagine this to be a question of mere curiosity; or, that it is of little importance whether it be determined one way or the other. Rather, it is a point of the utmost moment to every serious Christian; the resolving of which very nearly concerns both his present and eternal happiness.

"And yet I do not know that ever it was controverted in the primitive Church. Indeed, there was no room for disputing concerning it, as all Christians were agreed. And so far as I have ever observed, the whole body of ancient Christians, who have left us anything in writing, declare with one voice, that even believers in Christ, till they are 'strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might,' have need to 'wrestle with flesh and blood,' with an evil nature, as well as 'with principalities and powers.'

"And herein our own church (as indeed in most points) exactly copies after the primitive; declaring in her ninth

article, 'Original sin is the corruption of the nature of every man whereby every man is in his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth contrary to the Spirit. And this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated; whereby the lust of the flesh is not subject to the law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe, yet this lust hath of itself the nature of sin.' . . .

"Accordingly, believers are continually exhorted to watch against the flesh, as well as the world and the devil. And to this agrees the constant experience of the children of God. While they feel the witness in themselves, they feel a will not wholly resigned to the will of God. They know they are in Him; and yet find a heart ready to depart from Him, a proneness to evil in many instances, and a backwardness to that which is good. The contrary doctrine is wholly new; never heard of in the Church of Christ, from the time of His coming into the world, till the time of Count Zinzendorf; and it is attended with the most fatal consequence. It cuts off all watching against our evil nature, against the Delilah which we are told is gone, though she is still lying in our bosom. It tears away the shield of weak believers, deprives them of their faith, and so leaves them exposed to all the assaults of the world, the flesh, and the devil." — *Sermon on "Sin in Believers,"* vol. i. p. 108–115.

"It has been observed before, that the opposite doctrine, that there is no sin in believers, is quite new in the Church of Christ; that it was never heard of for seventeen hundred years; never till it was discovered by Count Zinzendorf. I do not remember to have seen the least intimation of it, either in any ancient or modern writer; unless perhaps in some of the wild, ranting Antinomians. And these likewise say and unsay, acknowledging there is sin *in their flesh*, although no *sin in the heart*." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 111.

"By sin, I here understand inward sin; any sinful temper, passion, or affection; such as pride, self-will, love of the world, in any kind or degree; such as lust, anger, peevishness; any disposition contrary to the mind which was in Christ.

"The question is not concerning *outward sin;* whether a child of God *commit sin* or no. We all agree and earnestly maintain, 'He that committeth sin is of the devil.' We agree, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.' Neither do we now inquire, whether inward sin will *always* remain in the children of God; whether sin will continue in the soul, as long as it continues in the body; nor yet do we inquire, whether a justified person may *relapse* either into inward or outward sin; but simply this, — is a justified or regenerate man freed from *all* sin as soon as he is justified? Is there then no sin in his heart? — nor ever after, unless he fall from grace?" — *Sermons,* vol. i. p. 109.

"How naturally do those who experience such a change, imagine that all sin is gone; that it is utterly rooted out of their heart, and has no more any place therein? How easily do they draw that inference: 'I *feel* no sin; therefore I *have* none; it does not *stir;* therefore it does not *exist;* it has no *motion;* therefore it has no *being.*

"But it is seldom long before they are undeceived, finding sin was only suspended, not destroyed. Temptations return, and sin revives; showing it was but stunned before, not dead. They now feel two principles in themselves, plainly contrary to each other: 'the flesh lusting against the Spirit;' nature opposing the grace of God. They cannot deny, that, although they still feel power to believe in Christ, and love God; and, although His 'Spirit (still) witnesses with their spirits, that they are children of God;' yet they feel in themselves sometimes pride or self-will, sometimes anger or unbelief." — *Sermons,* vol. i. p. 385, written in 1765.

"And as this position, there is no sin in a believer, no carnal mind, no bent to backsliding, is thus contrary to the Word of God, so it is to the experience of His children. These continually feel a heart bent to backsliding; a natural tendency to evil; a proneness to depart from God, and cleave to the things of earth. They are daily sensible of sin remaining in the heart, pride, self-will, unbelief; and of sin cleaving to all they speak or do, even their best actions and holiest duties. Yet at the same time they 'know that they are of God;' they cannot doubt of it for a moment. They feel His Spirit clearly 'witnessing with their spirit, that they are the children of God.' They rejoice in God through Christ Jesus, 'by whom they have now received the atonement.' So that they are equally assured, that sin is in them, and that 'Christ is in them the hope of glory.' . . . 'That believers are delivered from the *guilt* and *power* of sin we allow; that they are delivered from the *being* of it we deny. . . . Christ, indeed, can not *reign* where sin *reigns;* neither will he *dwell* where sin is *allowed.* But he *is* and *dwells* in the heart of every believer who is *fighting against all sin,* although it be not yet *purified* . . . Indeed, this grand point, that there are two contrary principles in [unsanctified] believers — *nature* and *grace,* the *flesh* and the *spirit,* — runs through all the Epistles of St. Paul, yea, through all the Holy Scriptures; almost all the directions and exhortations therein are founded on this supposition, pointing at wrong *tempers* or *practices* in those who are, notwithstanding, acknowledged by the inspired writers to be believers."

"One argument more against this new, unscriptural doctrine, may be drawn from the dreadful consequences of it. One says, 'I felt anger to-day.' Must I reply, 'Then you have no faith?' Another says, 'I know what you advise is good, but my will is quite averse to it.' Must I tell him,

'Then you are an unbeliever, under the wrath and the curse of God?' What will be the natural consequence of this? Why, if he believe what I say, his soul will not only be grieved and wounded, but perhaps utterly destroyed; inasmuch as he will 'cast away' that 'confidence which hath great recompense of reward;' and having cast away his shield, how shall he 'quench the fiery darts of the wicked one?' How shall he overcome the world? seeing 'this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.' He stands disarmed in the midst of his enemies, open to all their assaults. What wonder, then, if he be utterly overthrown; if they take him captive at their will; yea, if he fall from one wickedness to another, and never see good any more? I cannot, therefore, by any means, receive this assertion, that there is no sin in a believer from the moment he is justified; first, because it is contrary to the whole tenor of Scripture; — secondly, because it is contrary to the experience of the children of God; — thirdly, because it is absolutely new, never heard of in the world till yesterday; and, lastly, because it is naturally attended with the most fatal consequences; not only grieving those whom God hath not grieved, but perhaps dragging them into everlasting perdition." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 110, 111.

"I say, repentance, rightly understood; for this must not be confounded with the former repentance. The repentance consequent upon justification, is widely different from that which is antecedent to it. This implies no guilt, no sense of condemnation, no consciousness of the wrath of God. It does not suppose any doubt of the favor of God, or any 'fear that hath torment.' It is properly a conviction, wrought by the Holy Ghost, of the *sin* which still *remains* in our heart; of the *phronama sarkos, the carnal mind* which 'does still *remain* (as our church speaks), even in them that are regenerate;' although it does no longer *reign*;

it has not now dominion over them. It is a conviction of our proneness to evil, of a heart bent to backsliding, of the still continuing tendency of the flesh to lust against the Spirit. Sometimes, unless we continually watch and pray, it lusteth to pride, sometimes to anger, sometimes to love of the world, love of honor, or love of pleasure more than of God." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 389, written in 1765.

"From what has been said, we may easily learn the mischievousness of that opinion, that we are *wholly* sanctified when we are justified; that our hearts are then cleansed from all sin. It is true, we are then delivered, as was observed before, from the dominion of outward sin; and at the same time, the power of inward sin is so broken, that we need no longer follow, or be led by it: but it is by no means true, that inward sin is then totally destroyed; that the root of pride, self-will, anger, love of the world, is then taken out of the heart; or that the carnal mind, and the heart bent to backsliding, are entirely extirpated. And to suppose the contrary, is not, as some may think, an innocent, harmless mistake. No: it does immense harm; it entirely blocks up the way to any farther change: for it is manifest, 'They that are whole do not need a physician, but they that are sick.' If, therefore, we think we are quite made whole already, there is no room to seek any farther healing. On this supposition it is absurd to expect a farther deliverance from sin, whether gradual or instantaneous." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 124.

"Hence may appear the extreme mischievousness of that seemingly innocent opinion, That there is no sin in a believer; that all sin is destroyed, root and branch, the moment a man is justified. By totally preventing that repentance, it quite blocks up the way to sanctification; there is no place for repentance in him who believes there is no sin either in his life or heart: consequently there is no

place for his being perfected in love, to which that repentance is indispensably necessary." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 390.

"Suppose this is done, suppose he has now quickened us, infusing life into our dead souls; yet how much of the carnal mind remains! How prone is our heart to depart from the living God! What a tendency to sin remains in our heart, although we know our past sins are forgiven. And how much sin, in spite of all our endeavors, cleaves both to our words and actions! Who can be duly sensible, how much remains in him of his natural enmity to God!" — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 158.

"For even good men, in general, though sin has not dominion over them, yet are not freed from the remains of it. They have still the remains of an evil heart, ever prone to 'depart from the living God.' They have the seeds of pride, of anger, of foolish desire, indeed, of every unholy temper." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 214.

"Only let it be remembered, that the heart of even a believer is not wholly purified when he is justified. Sin is then overcome, but it is not rooted out; it is conquered, but not destroyed. Experience shows him, first, that the root of sin, self-will, pride, and idolatry, remain still in his heart. But as long as he continues to watch and pray, none of these can prevail over him." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 476.

"But though we readily acknowledge, 'he that believeth is born of God,' and 'he that is born of God doth not commit sin,' yet we cannot allow that he does not *feel* it within; it does not *reign*, but it does remain. And a conviction of the sin which *remains* in our heart, is one great branch of the repentance we are now speaking of." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 117.

"Neither, therefore, dare we affirm (as some have done) that this full salvation is at once given to true believers.

There is, indeed, an instantaneous (as well as a gradual) work of God in the souls of His children; and there wants not, we know, a cloud of witnesses, who have received, in one moment, either a clear sense of the forgiveness of their sins, or the abiding witness of the Holy Spirit. But we do not know a single instance, in any place, of a person's receiving, in one and the same moment, remission of sins, the abiding witness of the Spirit, and a new, a clean heart." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 596.

"Your finding sin remaining in you still, is no proof that you are not a believer. Sin does remain in one that is justified, though it has not dominion over him. For he has not a clean heart at first, neither are 'all things' as yet 'become new.' But fear not, though you have an evil heart. Yet a little while, and you shall be endued with power from on high, whereby you may 'purify yourselves, even as He is pure;' and be 'holy, as He which hath called you is holy.'" — *Journal*, June, 1740.

"I have so often explained this, that I cannot throw away time in adding any more now; only this, — that the moment a sinner is justified, his heart is cleansed in a low degree. But yet he has not a clean heart, in the full, proper sense, till he is made perfect in love." — *Works*, vol. v. p. 284.

"At every place, I endeavored to settle the minds of the poor people, who had been not a little harassed by a new doctrine which honest Jonathan C—— and his converts had industriously propagated among them, — that 'there is *no sin* in believers; but the moment we believe, sin is destroyed, root and branch.' I trust this plague also is stayed; but how ought those unstable ones to be ashamed who are so easily 'tossed about with every wind of doctrine!'" — *Journal*, June, 1763.

To Rev. Joseph Benson, in 1770: —

"Now, can any be justified, but by faith? None can. Therefore, you are a believer; you have faith in Christ; you know the Lord; you can say, 'My Lord and my God.' And whoever denies this, may as well deny that the sun shines at noonday.

Yet still ten thousand lusts remain,
And vex your soul, absolved from sin;
Still rebel nature strives to reign,
And you are all unclean, unclean!

This is equally clear and undeniable. And this is not only your experience, but the experience of a thousand believers beside, who yet are sure of God's favor, as of their own existence. To cut off all doubt on this head, I beg you to give another serious reading to those two sermons, 'Sin in Believers,' and 'The Repentance of Believers.'

"'But is there no help? Is there no deliverance, no salvation from this inbred enemy?' Surely there is; else many great and precious promises must fall to the ground. 'I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you.' 'I will circumcise thy heart' (from all sin), 'to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.' This I term sanctification (which is both an instantaneous and a gradual work), or perfection, the being perfected in love, filled with love, which still admits of a thousand degrees." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 71.

"They know (the Methodists), indeed, that at the same time a man is justified, sanctification properly begins. For when he is justified, he is 'born again,' 'born from above'; 'born of the Spirit'; which, although it is not (as some suppose) the whole process of sanctification, is, doubtless, the gate of it." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 390.

"It is, then, a great blessing given to his people (the Methodists), that as they do not speak of justification so as

to supersede sanctification, so neither do they speak of sanctification, so as to supersede justification. They take care to keep each in its own place, laying equal stress on one and the other. They know God has joined these together, and it is not for man to put them asunder; therefore they maintain, with equal zeal and diligence, the doctrine of free, full, present justification, on the one hand; and of entire sanctification, both of heart and life, on the other." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 390. Written in 1765.

SECTION IV.

THE JUSTIFIED AND REGENERATE STATE DOES NOT ADMIT OF COMMITTING SIN.

"An immediate and constant fruit of this faith whereby we are born of God, a fruit which can in no wise be separate from it, no, not for an hour, is power over sin, — power over outward sin of every kind; every evil word and work. . . . 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for His seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God' (1 John iii. 9). But some men will say, 'True; whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin *habitually*.' *Habitually!* Whence is that? I read it not. It is not written in the Book. God plainly saith, 'He doth not commit sin;' and thou addest *habitually!* Who art thou that *mendest* the oracles of God? . . . Suffer we the apostle to interpret his own words by the whole tenor of his discourse. In the fifth verse of this chapter, he had said, 'Ye know that He (Christ) was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.' What is the inference he draws from this? 'Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him' (v. 6). To this enforcement of this important doctrine, he premises a highly necessary caution, — 'Little children, let no man deceive you' (v. 7); for many will endeavor so to do, to persuade you that you may be unrighteous, that you may commit sin, and yet be the children of God; 'he that doeth righteousness is righteous even as He is righteous. He that committeth

sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning.' Then follows: 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.' 'In this,' adds the apostle, 'the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil.' By this plain mark (the committing or not committing sin) are they distinguished from each other. To the same effect are those words in the fifth chapter: 'We know that whosoever is born of God *sinneth not;* but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not' (v. 18)." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 155.

"No one who is so born of God as hath been above described, who continually receives into his soul the breath of life from God, the gracious influence of His Spirit, and continually renders it back; one who thus believes and loves, who by faith perceives the continual actings of God upon his spirit, and by a kind of spiritual reaction returns the grace he receives, in unceasing love, and praise, and prayer; not only does not commit sin, while he thus keepeth himself, but so long as this 'seed remaineth in him, he cannot sin, because he is born of God.'

"By sin, I here understand, outward sin, according to the plain, common acceptation of the word; an actual, voluntary transgression of the law; of the revealed, written law of God; of any commandment of God, acknowledged to be such at this time that it is transgressed. But 'whosoever is born of God'; while he abides in faith and love, and in the spirit of prayer and thanksgiving, not only doth not, but cannot thus commit sin. So long as he thus believeth in God through Christ, and loves Him, and is pouring out his heart before Him, he cannot voluntarily trangress any command of God, either by speaking or acting what he knows God hath forbidden; so long that seed which remaineth in him, that loving, praying, thankful faith, compels

him to refrain from whatsoever he knows to be an abomination in the sight of God." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 164.

"But even babes in Christ are in such a sense perfect, or born of God (an expression taken also in divers senses) as first, not to commit sin. . . . Now the Word of God plainly declares, that even those who are justified, who are born again in the lowest sense, do not continue in sin; that they cannot 'live any longer therein' (Rom. vi. 1, 2); that they are 'planted together in the likeness of the death' of Christ (verse 5); that their 'old man is crucified with him,' the body of sin being destroyed, so that henceforth they do not serve sin; that being dead with Christ, they are free from sin (verses 6 and 7); that they are 'dead unto sin and alive unto God' (verse 11); that 'sin hath no more dominion over them'; who are 'not under the law, but under grace'; but that these, 'being free from sin,' are become the servants of righteousness (verses 14 and 18)." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 359.

"He that is by faith, born of God, sinneth not; 1st, by any habitual sin, for all habitual sin is reigning, but sin cannot reign in any that believeth. Nor, 2d, by any wilful sin, for his will while he abideth in that faith is utterly set against all sin, and abhorreth it as deadly poison. Nor, 3d, by any sinful desire; for he continually desireth the holy and perfect will of God; and any tendency to an unholy desire, he, by the grace of God, stifleth in the birth. Nor, 4th, doth he sin by infirmities, whether in act, word, or thought; for his infirmities have no concurrence of his will; and without this they are not properly sins. Thus, 'he that is born God doth not commit sin.' And though he cannot say he hath not sinned, yet now, he sinneth not." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 16.

"Although they feel the root of bitterness in themselves, yet are they endowed with power from on high, to trample it continually under foot, so that it cannot 'spring up to

trouble them;' insomuch, that every fresh assault which they undergo, only gives them fresh occasion of crying out, 'Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'" — *Sermons,* vol. i. p. 69.

SECTION V.

NO CONDEMNATION TO JUSTIFIED BELIEVERS

"ALTHOUGH they are continually convinced of sin cleaving to all they do; although they are conscious of not fulfilling the perfect law, either in their thoughts, or words, or works; although they know they do not love the Lord their God with all their heart, and mind, and soul, and strength; although they feel more or less of pride, or self-will, stealing in and mixing with their best duties. . . . Yet there is no condemnation to them still, either from God, or from their own heart."

"There is no condemnation to them which 'walk after the Spirit,' by reason of *inward sin*, still remaining, so long as they do not give way thereto; nor by reason of *sin cleaving* to all they do. Then fret not thyself because of ungodliness, though it still remain in thy heart."

"They are not condemned, thirdly, for inward sin, even though it does now remain. That the corruption of nature does still remain, even in those who are the children of God by faith; that they have in them the seeds of pride and vanity, of anger, lust, and evil desire; yea, sin of every kind; is too plain to be denied, being matter of daily experience. And on this account it is that St. Paul, speaking to those whom he had just before witnessed to be 'in Christ Jesus' (1 Cor. i. 2, 9), to have been 'called of God into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ;' yet declares, 'Brethren, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ' (1 Cor. iii. 1)."

"And yet, for all this, they are not condemned. Although they feel the flesh, the evil nature in them; although they are more sensible, day by day, that their 'heart is deceitful and desperately wicked;' yet so long as they do not yield thereto; so long as they give no place to the devil; so long as they maintain a continual war with all sin, with pride, anger, desire, so that the flesh hath not dominion over them, but they still 'walk after the Spirit;' 'there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

"There is no condemnation to them for anything whatever, which it is not in their power to help; whether it be of an inward or outward nature, and whether it be doing something, or leaving something undone. For instance, the Lord's Supper is to be administered; but you do not partake thereof. Why do you not? You are confined by sickness; therefore, you cannot help omitting it; for the same reason you are not condemned. There is no guilt, because there is no choice. As there is 'a willing mind, it is accepted, according to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not.'"

"They are not condemned for sins of infirmity, as they are usually called. Perhaps it were advisable rather to call them *infirmities*, that we may not seem to give any countenance to sin, or to extenuate it in any degree, by thus coupling it with infirmity. But (if we must retain so ambiguous and dangerous an expression), by sins of infirmity I would mean, such involuntary failings, as the saying a thing we believe true, though, in fact, it prove to be false; or the hurting our neighbor without knowing or designing it, perhaps when we designed to do him good. Though these are deviations from the holy, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, yet they are not properly sins, nor do they bring any guilt on the conscience of 'them which are in Christ Jesus.'" — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 70–73.

SECTION VI.

JUSTIFIED BELIEVERS CONVICTED OF INDWELLING SIN.

"It is not easy to conceive what a difference there is between that which he experiences now, and that which he experienced before. Till this universal change was wrought in his soul, all his holiness was *mixed*. He was humble, but not entirely; his humility was mixed with pride: he was meek, but his meekness was frequently interrupted by anger, or some uneasy and turbulent passion. His love of God was frequently dampened by the love of some creature; the love of his neighbor, by evil surmising, or some thought, if not temper, contrary to love. His will was not wholly melted down into the will of God; but although in general he could say, I come, 'not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me;' yet now and then nature rebelled, and he could not clearly say, 'Lord, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.' His whole soul is now consistent with itself; there is no jarring string." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 222.

"In this peace they remain for days, or weeks, or months, and commonly suppose they shall not know war any more, till some of their old enemies, their bosom sins, or the sin which did most easily beset them (perhaps anger or desire), assault them again, and thrust sore at them, that they may fall. Then arises fear, that they shall not endure to the end, and often doubt, whether God has not forgotten them, or whether they did not deceive themselves, in thinking their

sins were forgiven, and that they were children of God. Under these clouds, especially if they reason with the devil, or are received to doubtful disputations, they go mourning all the day long, even as a father mourneth for his only son whom he loveth. But it is seldom long before their Lord answers for himself, sending them the Holy Ghost, to comfort them, to bear witness continually with their spirit, that they are the children of God. And then they are indeed meek, and gentle, and teachable, even as little children. Their stony heart was broken in pieces, before they received remission of sins: yet it continued hard; but now it is melted down, it is soft, tender, and susceptible of any impression. And now first do they see the ground of their heart; which God would not before disclose unto them, lest the flesh should fail before Him, and the spirit which He had made. Now they see all the hidden abominations there; the depths of pride, and self, and hell: yet, having the witness in themselves, — thou art 'an heir of God, a joint heir with Christ;' thou shalt 'inherit the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness,' — their spirit rejoiceth in God their Saviour, even in the midst of this fiery trial, which continually heightens both the strong sense they then have of their inability to help themselves, and the inexpressible hunger they feel after a full renewal in His image, in righteousness, and all true holiness. Then God is mindful of the desire of them that fear Him: He remembers His holy covenant, and He giveth them a single eye and a clean heart. He stamps upon them His own image and superscription; He createth them anew in Christ Jesus; He cometh unto them with His Son and His blessed Spirit, and, fixing His abode in their souls, bringeth them into the 'rest which remaineth for the people of God.'" — *Works.* vol. vii. p. 597.

"Thence I rode six or seven miles to Tonny-Lommon,

where was a congregation of quite another kind. Great part of them knew in whom they had believed; all were deeply and steadily attentive; and many were thoroughly convinced of inbred sin, and groaning for full redemption." —*Journal*, May, 1769.

"For it is seldom long before he who imagined all sin was gone, feels there is *pride* in his heart. He is convinced both that in many respects he has thought of himself more highly than he ought to think, and that he has taken to himself the praise of something he had received, and glorified in it as though he had not received it; and yet he knows he is in the favor of God. He cannot, and ought not, 'to cast away his confidence.' 'The Spirit' still 'witnesses with' his 'spirit, that he is a child of God.'

"Nor is it long before he feels *self-will* in his heart; even a will contrary to the will of God, — a will every man must inevitably have, as long as he has an understanding. This is an essential part of human nature; indeed, of the nature of every intelligent being. Our blessed Lord Himself had a will as a man; otherwise He had not been a man. But His human will was invariably subject to the will of His Father. At all times, and on all occasions, even in the deepest affliction, He could say, 'Not as I will, but as Thou wilt.' But this is not the case at all times, even with a true believer in Christ. He frequently finds his will more or less exalting itself against the will of God. He wills something because it is pleasing to nature, which is not pleasing to God; and he wills (is averse from) something, because it is painful to nature, which is the will of God concerning him. Indeed, suppose he continues in the faith, he fights against it with all his might: but this very thing implies that it really exists, and that he is conscious of it.

"And do we not feel other tempers, which are as contrary to the love of our neighbor as these are to the love of God?

The love of our neighbor 'thinketh no evil.' Do not we find anything of the kind? Do we never find any *jealousies*, any *evil surmisings*, any groundless or unreasonable suspicions? He that is clear in these respects, let him cast the first stone at his neighbor. Who does not sometimes feel other tempers or inward motions, which he knows are contrary to brotherly love? If nothing of *malice*, *hatred*, or *bitterness*, is there no touch of *envy*, particularly towards those who enjoy some real or supposed good which we desire but cannot attain? Do we never find any degree of *resentment*, when we are injured or affronted, especially by those whom we peculiarly loved, and whom we had most labored to help and oblige? Does injustice or ingratitude never excite in us any desire of *revenge?* Any desire of returning evil for evil, instead of 'overcoming evil with good'? This also shows how much is still in our heart which is contrary to the love of our neighbor." — "*Repentance of Believers*" — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 116.

"On Friday, the 13th, about thirty persons were met together at Otley, about eight o'clock in the evening, in order (as usual) to pray, sing hymns, and provoke one another to love and good works. After prayer was ended, when they proceeded to speak of the several states of their souls, some with deep sighs and groans, complained of the burden they felt for the remains of indwelling sin, seeing, in a clearer light than ever before, the necessity of a deliverance from it." — *Journal*, Feb. 1760.

SECTION VII.

THE LENGTH OF TIME BETWEEN REGENERATION AND ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION.

"WITH God, one day is as a thousand years. It plainly follows that the quantity of time is nothing to Him. Centuries, years, months, days, hours, and moments, are exactly the same. Consequently He can as well *sanctify in a day, after we are justified*, as a hundred years. There is no difference at all, unless we suppose Him to be such a one as ourselves. Accordingly, we see, in fact, that some of the most unquestionable witnesses of sanctifying grace *were sanctified within a* FEW DAYS *after they* were justified. Oh, why do we not encourage all to expect this blessing *every hour from the moment they are justified?*" — Vol. iv. p. 451.

"They met again at Macclesfield the next night, and six or seven more were filled with peace and joy in believing. So were one or two more every night till the Monday following, when there was another general shower of grace. And many believed that 'the blood of Christ had cleansed them from all sin.' I spoke to these (forty in all), one by one. Some of them said they received that blessing, ten days, some seven, some four, some three days, after they found peace with God. What marvel, since 'one day is with God as a thousand years!'" — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 381.

To a member of the society: —

"Every one, though born of God in an instant, yea, and

sanctified in an instant, yet undoubtedly grows by slow degrees, both after the former and the latter change. But it does not follow from thence, that there must be a considerable tract of time between the one and the other. A year or a month is the same with God as a thousand. If He wills, to do is present with Him: much less is there any necessity for much suffering: God can do His work by pleasure as well as by pain. It is, therefore, undoubtedly our duty to pray and look for full salvation every day, every hour, every moment, without waiting till we have either done or suffered more. Why should not this be the accepted time?" — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 764.

"The next morning I spoke severally with those who believed they were sanctified. They were fifty-one in all, — twenty-one men, twenty-one widows or married women, and nine young women or children. In one of these the change was wrought three weeks after she was justified; in three, seven days after it; in one, five days; and in Samuel Lutwich, aged fourteen, two days only." — *Works*, vol. vii p. 389.

"After meeting the society (at Whitby), I talked with a sensible woman, whose experience seemed peculiar. She said: 'A few days before Easter last, I was deeply convinced of sin; and in Easter week, I knew my sins were forgiven, and was filled with 'joy and peace in believing. But in about eighteen days, I was convinced, in a dream, of the necessity of a higher salvation; and I mourned day and night, in agony of desire to be thoroughly sanctified; till on the twenty-third day after my justification, I found a total change, together with a clear witness that the blood of Jesus had cleansed me from all unrighteousness." — *Journal*, June, 1761.

"The case of Mr. Timmins is no less remarkable. He

had been a notorious sinner. He was deeply wounded two months since. Ten days ago, on a Friday, God spake peace to his soul. The Sunday following, after a violent struggle, he sunk down as dead. He was cold as clay. After about ten minutes he came to himself, and cried, 'A new heart, a new heart!' He said he felt himself in an instant entirely emptied of sin, and filled with God. Brother Barry, likewise, had been justified but a few days, before God gave him purity of heart." — *Journal*, July, 1762.

"'During his last prayer, I was quite overwhelmed with the power of God. I felt an inexpressible change in the very depth of my heart; and from that hour I have felt no anger, no pride, no wrong temper of any kind; nothing contrary to the pure love of God, which I feel continually. I desire nothing but Christ; and I have Christ always reigning in my heart. I want nothing; He is my sufficient portion in time and eternity.'

"Such an instance (Grace Paddy) I never knew before; such an instance I never read: a person convinced of sin, converted to God, and renewed in love, within twelve hours! Yet it is by no means incredible, seeing one day is with God as a thousand years." — *Journal*, Sept. 1765.

"I asked her that cried so violently in the morning, what was the matter with her. She said, 'I was so overwhelmed with the power and love of God that I could not hide it.' When I questioned her farther, she said, 'A quarter of a year ago, one Saturday night, I was quite convinced I was a sinner, and afraid of dropping into hell; but on Sunday I felt the pardoning love of God; yet I had many doubts till Monday evening, when they were all taken away in a moment. After this, I saw and felt the wickedness of my heart, and longed to be delivered from it; and on Sunday I was delivered, and had as clear a witness of this, as of my justification." — *Journal*, June, 1770.

"Although, therefore, it usually pleases God to interpose some time between justification and sanctification, yet we must not fancy this to be an invariable rule. All who think this must think we are sanctified by works, or which comes to the same, by suffering; for otherwise, what is time necessary for? It must be either to do, or to suffer. Whereas if nothing be required but simple faith, a moment is as good as an age." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 14.

Letter to Thomas Rankin in 1774: —

"I have been lately thinking a good deal on one point, wherein, perhaps, we have all been wanting. We have not made it a *rule, as soon as ever persons are justified, to remind them of 'going on unto perfection.'* WHEREAS THIS IS THE VERY TIME PREFERABLE TO ALL OTHERS. They have then the simplicity of little children; and they are fervent in spirit, ready to cut off a right hand or to pluck out the right eye. But if we once suffer this fervor to subside, we shall find it hard enough to bring them again even to this point."

In the early part of Mr. Wesley's ministry, he believed that entire sanctification was almost always a gradual work, to be received at or near death, and that the newly converted child of God could not be fully saved, except in rare cases, until some time had elapsed. But, as numerous examples rapidly multiplied around him, the genuineness of whose experience he saw no reason to doubt, he soon came to fully accept the doctrine of instantaneous sanctification, by faith, at any time after conversion. (See Section viii.)

SECTION VIII.

SANCTIFICATION INSTANTANEOUS, BY FAITH, AND NOT BY GROWTH IN GRACE.

MR. WESLEY taught instantaneous sanctification by *faith*, twenty years before the great revival of holiness in 1761–63, and afterwards on to the close of his life in 1791.

"I dislike the saying, this was not known or taught among us till within two or three years. I grant you did not know it. You have over and over denied instantaneous sanctification to me; but I have known and taught it (and so has my brother, as our writings show) above these twenty years." — *Letter to Bell and Owen, Journal*, Oct., 1762.

This declaration, with others made by Mr. Wesley, show that Charles Wesley, as well as himself, had for years taught instantaneous sanctification, although afterwards, on account of the Maxwell and Bell fanaticism, for a time he turned somewhat against it. (See Wesley's letter of 1768, in this section.)

At the first Methodist Conference, in 1744, it was asked: "Is faith the instrument or the condition of sanctification"? It was answered: "It is both the condition and instrument of it. When we begin to believe, then sanctification begins, and as faith increases, holiness increases, till we are created anew. — *Tyerman*, vol. ii. p. 417.

In 1749, he taught:—

"1. Christian Perfection is that love of God and our neighbors which implies deliverance from all sin.

"2. That this is received merely by faith.

"3. That it is given instantaneously, in one moment.

"4. That we are to expect it, not at death, but every moment; 'that now is the accepted time, now is the day of this salvation.'" —*Works*, vol. vi. p. 500.

"Inquiring (in 1761) how it was that in all these parts we have so few witnesses of full salvation, I constantly receive one and the same answer: 'We see now we sought it by our works; we thought it was to *come gradually;* we never expected it to come in a moment, by simple faith, in the very same manner as we received justification.' What wonder is it, then, that you have been fighting all these years as one that beateth the air." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 377.

"By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin, and restored to the favor of God; by sanctification we are saved from the power and root of sin, and restored to the image of God. All experience, as well as Scripture, shows this salvation to be both instantaneous and gradual. It begins the moment we are justified, in the holy, humble, gentle, patient love of God and man. It gradually increases from that moment, as 'a grain of mustard seed, which, at first, is the least of all seeds,' but afterwards puts forth large branches, and becomes a great tree; till, in another instant the heart is cleansed from all sin, and filled with pure love of God and man." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 236.

"I have continually testified (for these five-and-twenty years) in private and public, that we are sanctified as well as justified by faith. And, indeed, the one of those great truths *does exceedingly illustrate the other.* EXACTLY AS WE

ARE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, SO ARE WE SANCTIFIED BY FAITH." — *Works*, vol. i. p. 338.

"You may obtain a *growing* victory *over* sin from the moment you are justified. *But this is not enough.* The *body of sin*, the *carnal mind*, must be *destroyed;* the old man must be slain, or we can not put on the new man, which is created after God (or which is the image of God) in righteousness and true holiness; and this is *done in a moment. To talk of this work as being gradual, would be nonsense, as much as if we talked of gradual justification.*" — *Journal of H. A. Rogers*, p. 174.

"'But does God work this great work in the soul gradually or instantaneously?' Perhaps it may be gradually wrought in some; I mean in this sense, they do not advert to the particular moment wherein sin ceases to be. But it is infinitely desirable, were it the will of God, that it should be done instantaneously; that the Lord should destroy sin 'by the breath of His mouth,' in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. And so he generally does; a plain fact, of which there is evidence enough to satisfy any unprejudiced person. *Thou* therefore look for it every moment! Look for it in the way above described; in all those *good works* whereunto thou art 'created anew in Christ Jesus.' There is then no danger: you can be no worse, if you are no better for that expectation. For were you to be disappointed of your hope, still you lose nothing. But you shall not be disappointed of your hope: it will come, and will not tarry. Look for it then every day, every hour, every moment! Why not this hour, this moment? Certainly you may look for it *now*, if you believe it is by faith. And by this token you may surely know whether you seek it by faith or by works. If by works, you want something to be done *first, before* you are sanctified. You think I must *be* or *do* thus or thus.

Then you are seeking it by works unto this day. If you are seeking it by faith, you may expect it *as you are now;* and if as you are, then expect it *now.* It is of importance to observe, that there is an inseparable connection between these three points, expect it *by faith,* expect it *as you are,* expect it *now!* To deny one of them is to deny them all. To allow one, is to allow them all. Do *you* believe we are sanctified by faith? Be true then to your principle; and look for the blessing just as you are, neither better nor worse; as a poor sinner that has still nothing to pay, nothing to plead, but Christ *died.* And if you look for it as you are, then expect it *now.* Stay for nothing: why should you? Christ is ready; and He is all you want. He is waiting for you: He is at the door! Let your inmost soul cry out: —

> "Come in, come in, thou heavenly guest!
> Nor hence again remove;
> But sup with me, and let the feast
> Be everlasting love."

— *Sermon,* vol. i. pp. 390, 391.

"Indeed this is so evident a truth, that well nigh all the children of God, scattered abroad, however they differ in other points, yet generally agree in this; that although we may, 'by the Spirit, mortify the deeds of the body;' resist and conquer both outward and inward sin: although we may weaken our enemies day by day; yet we cannot *drive them out.* By all the grace which is given at justification, we cannot extirpate them. Though we watch and pray ever so much, we cannot wholly cleanse either our hearts or hands. Most sure we cannot till it shall please our Lord to speak to our hearts again, to speak the second time, be clean: and then only the leprosy is cleansed. Then only, the evil root, the carnal mind, is destroyed; and inbred sin subsists no more. But if there be no such second change, if there be no instantaneous deliverance after justification, if there be

none but a gradual work of God (that there is a gradual work none denies), then we must be content, as well as we can, to remain full of sin till death; and, if so, we must remain guilty till death, continually *deserving* punishment." — *Sermons,* vol. ii. p. 122.

"Does He work it gradually, by slow degrees; or instantaneously in a moment? How many are the disputes upon this head, even among the children of God! And so there will be, after all that ever was, or ever can be said upon it. For many will still say, with the famous Jew, 'thou shalt not persuade me, though thou dost persuade me.' And they will be the more resolute herein, because the Scriptures are silent upon the subject: because the point is not determined, at least not in express terms, in any part of the oracles of God. Every man, therefore, may abound in his own sense, provided he will allow the same liberty to his neighbor; provided he will not be angry at those who differ from his opinion, nor entertain hard thoughts concerning them. Permit me likewise to add one thing more: be the change instantaneous or gradual, see that you never rest till it is wrought in your own soul, if you desire to dwell with God in glory." — *Sermons,* vol. ii. p. 222.

"In the same proportion as he grows in faith he grows in holiness; he increases in love, lowliness, meekness, in every part of the image of God; till it pleases God, after he is thoroughly convinced of inbred sin, of the total corruption of his nature, to take it all away; to purify his heart and cleanse him from all unrighteousness; to fulfil that promise which he made first to His ancient people, and in them to the Israel of God in all ages: 'I will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." — *Sermons,* vol. ii. p. 222.

"This premised, in order to throw what light I can upon this interesting question, I will simply relate what I have seen myself in the course of many years. Four or five and forty years go, when I had no distinct views of what the apostle meant, by exhorting us to 'leave the principle of the doctrine of Christ, and go on to perfection;' two or three persons in London, whom I knew to be truly sincere, desired to give me an account of their experience. It appeared exceeding strange, being different from any that I had heard before: but exactly similar to the preceding account of entire sanctification. The next year, two or three more persons at Bristol, and two or three in Kingswood, coming to me severally, gave me exactly the same account of their experience. A few years after, I desired all those in London, who made the same profession, to come to me all together at the Foundery, that I might be thoroughly satisfied. I desired that man of God, Thomas Walsh, to give us the meeting there. When we met, first one of us, and then the other, asked the most searching questions we could devise. They answered every one without hesitation, and with the utmost simplicity, so that we were fully persuaded, they did not deceive themselves."

"In the years 1759, 1760, 1761, and 1762, their numbers multiplied exceedingly, not only in London and Bristol, but in various parts of Ireland as well as England. Not trusting to the testimony of others, I carefully examined most of these myself; and in London alone, I found six hundred and fifty-two members of our society, who were exceeding clear in their experience, and of whose testimony I could see no reason to doubt. I believe no year has passed since that time, wherein God has not wrought the same work in many others; but sometimes in one part of England or Ireland, sometimes in another;—as 'the wind bloweth where it listeth;'—and every one of these (after the most

careful inquiry, I have not found one exception either in Great Britain or Ireland) has declared that his deliverance from sin was *instantaneous:* that the change was wrought in a moment. Had half of these, or one third, or one in twenty, declared it was *gradually* wrought in *them*, I should have believed this, with regard to *them*, and thought that *some* were gradually sanctified and some instantaneously. But as I have not found, in so long a space of time, a single person speaking thus; as all who believe they are sanctified, declare with one voice, that the change was wrought in a moment, I cannot but believe, that sanctification is commonly, if not always, an *instantaneous* work." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 223.

This sermon was written but a short time before Mr. Wesley's death. (See Tyerman, vol. i. p. 462.)

Letter to C. Wesley, 1767: —

"I still think, to disbelieve all the professors, amounts to a denial of the thing. For if there be no living witness of what we have preached for twenty years, I cannot, dare not, preach it any longer. The whole comes to one point: Is there, or is there not, any instantaneous sanctification between justification and death? I say, yes. You (*often seem* to) say, no. What arguments brought you to think so? Perhaps they may convince me too." — Vol. vi. p. 669.

"I like your doctrine of perfection, or pure love; love excluding sin; your insisting that it is merely by faith; that consequently it is instantaneous (though preceded and followed by a gradual work), and that it may be now at this instant." — *Letter to Bell and Owen, Journal*, Oct., 1762.

"It is also a plain fact, that this power does commonly overshadow them in an instant; and that from that time they enjoy that inward and outward holiness, to which they were utter strangers before." — *Journal*, Aug., 1768.

To his brother Charles, 1768: —

"I rejoice to hear, from various persons, so good an account of the work of God in London. You did not come thither without the Lord; and you find your labor is not in vain. I doubt not but you will see more and more fruit, while you converse chiefly with them that are athirst for God. I find a wonderful difference in myself when I am among these, and when I am among fashionable Methodists. On this account the north of England suits me best, where so many are groaning after full redemption.

"But what shall we do? I think it is high time that you and I, at least, should come to a point. Shall we go on in asserting perfection against all the world? Or shall we quietly let it drop? We really must do one or the other; and, I apprehend, the sooner the better. What shall we jointly and explicitly maintain (and recommend to all our preachers), concerning the nature, the time (now, or by and by), and the manner of it? instantaneous or not? I am weary of intestine war; of preachers quoting one of us against the other. At length, let us *fix* something for good and all; either the same as formerly, or different from it. *Erroso.* [Farewell]." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 672.

Dr. Stevens, in his "History of Methodism," says: "Wesley claimed it as, like justification, an attainment of faith, and practicable at any moment." — Vol. i. p. 406.

Tyerman says: "The doctrine of Christian perfection, attainable in an instant by a simple act of faith, was *made prominent* in Methodist congregations in 1762, and *ever after* it was one of the *chief topics* of Mr. Wesley's ministry and that of his itinerant preachers." (*Tyerman*, vol. ii. pp. 346, 416, 444.) According to this, during

half of his ministerial life, Mr. Wesley made *instantaneous* sanctification a prominent topic of his ministry. He wrote his brother Charles, in 1766: "Insist everywhere on full redemption received now by faith alone. . . . Press the *instantaneous* blessing."

SECTION IX.

HOW CHRISTIAN PERFECTION IS TO BE OBTAINED.

At thirty-five years of age, in 1738, Mr. Wesley preached his sermon on "Salvation by Faith," before the University at Oxford, in which he said: —

"What salvation is it, which is through this faith.

"1. And first, whatever else it imply, it is a present salvation. It is something attainable, yea, actually attained on earth, by those who are partakers of this faith. For thus saith the apostle to the believers at Ephesus, and in them to the believers of all ages, not *ye shall be* (though that also is true) but *ye are saved through faith.*"

"2. Ye are saved (to comprise all in one word) from sin. This is the salvation which is through faith. This is that great salvation foretold by the angel, before God brought His first-begotten into the world: 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.' And neither here, nor in other parts of Holy Writ, is there any limitation or restriction. All His people, or as it is elsewhere expressed, 'all that believe in Him,' He will save from all their sins; from original and actual, past and present sin 'of the flesh and of the spirit.' Through faith that is in Him, they are saved both from the guilt and from the power of it." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 15.

In 1744, Mr. Wesley published his "Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," in which he says:

"This only we confess, that we preach inward salvation, *now attainable by faith.*"

"But what is that faith whereby we are sanctified? saved from sin, and perfected in love? It is a Divine evidence and conviction, first, that God hath promised it in the Holy Scripture. Till we are thoroughly satisfied of this, there is no moving one step farther.

"It is a Divine evidence and conviction, secondly, that what God hath promised He is able to perform. Admitting, therefore, that 'with men it is impossible' to 'bring a clean thing out of an unclean,' to purify the heart from all sin, and to fill it with all holiness; yet this creates no difficulty in the case, seeing 'with God all things are possible.'

"It is, thirdly, a Divine evidence and conviction that He is able and willing to do it now. And why not? Is not a moment to Him the same as a thousand years? He cannot want more time to accomplish whatever is His will. And He cannot want or stay for any more *worthiness* or *fitness* in the persons He is pleased to honor. We may, therefore, boldly say, at any one point of time, 'Now is the day of salvation!' 'To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.' 'Behold, all things are now ready, come unto the marriage!'

"To this confidence, that God is both able and willing to sanctify us now, there needs to be added one thing more, a Divine evidence and conviction, that He doeth it. In that hour it is done, God says to the inmost soul, 'According to thy faith be it unto thee!' Then the soul is pure from every spot of sin; it is clean 'from all unrighteousness.' The believer then experiences the deep meaning of those solemn words, 'If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 390.

Tyerman says: "It must be borne in mind that it was not until now (1672), that the doctrine of Christian perfection, attainable in an instant by a simple act of faith, was made prominent in Methodist congregations; but that, ever after, it was one of the chief topics of Wesley's ministry, and that of his itinerant preachers." — Vol. ii. p. 444.

Dr. Whitehead, in his "Life of Wesley," says: "The doctrine of *perfection*, or *perfect love*, was undoubtedly taught among the Methodists from the beginning; but the *manner* in which it was now preached (in 1762), pressing the people to expect what was called the destruction of the *root* of sin, in one moment, was most certainly new." — Vol. ii. p. 299.

This statement of Dr. Whitehead does not do Mr. Wesley justice on this subject. In the light of the statements and dates given by Mr. Wesley himself, the most that can be safely said respecting his teaching before 1762, is, that for many years before that time, he taught instantaneous sanctification by faith, but had less light on the subject, and preached and pressed it less, than after the great outpouring of that period.

To Lady ——, in 1771: —

"Many years since I saw that 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' I began following after it, and inciting all with whom I had any intercourse to do the same. Ten years after, God gave me a clearer view than I had before, of the way how to attain this; namely, by faith in the Son of God. And immediately I declared to all, 'We are saved from sin, we are made holy, by faith.' This I testified in private, in public, in print; and God confirmed it by a thousand witnesses. I have continued to declare this for

above thirty years; and God hath continued to confirm the word of His grace. But during this time well nigh all the religious world hath set themselves in array against me, and among the rest, many of my own children, following the example of one of my eldest sons, Mr. W. Their general cry has been, 'He is unsound in the faith; he preaches another Gospel!' I answer, Whether it be the same which they preach or not, it is the same which I have preached for above thirty years. This may easily appear from what I have published during that whole term. I instance only in three sermons, that on 'Salvation by Faith,' printed in the year 1738; that on 'The Lord our Righteousness,' printed a few years since; and that on Mr. Whitfield's funeral, printed only some months ago." — *Works,* vol. vii. p. 36.

To Miss Pywell, in 1777: —

"One part of your work is to stir up all who have believed, to go on to perfection, and every moment to expect the full salvation which is received by simple faith. I am persuaded your being where you are will be for good. Speak to all about you, and spare not. God will bear witness to His own truth." — *Works,* vol. vii. p. 35.

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ whom God hath given to be the propitiation for thy sins, and thou shalt be saved, first from the guilt of sin, having redemption through His blood; then from the power, which shall have no more dominion over thee; and then from the root of it, into the whole image of God." — *Sermons,* vol. ii. p. 405.

"Sanctification, too, 'is not of works, lest any man should boast.' 'It is the gift of God,' and is to be received by plain, simple faith. Suppose you are now laboring to 'abstain from all appearance of evil,' 'zealous of good works,' and walking diligently and carefully in all the ordinances of God; there is then only one point remaining: the voice of

God to your soul is, 'Believe, and be saved.' First, believe that God has *promised* to save you from all sin, and to fill you with all holiness; secondly, believe that He is *able* thus 'to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him;' thirdly, believe that He is *willing*, as well as able, to save *you* to the uttermost; to purify you from all sin, and fill up all your heart with love. Believe fourthly, that He is not only able, but willing to do it *now!* Not when you come to die; not at any distant time; not to-morrow, but *to-day*. He will then enable you to believe, *it is done*, according to His Word: and then 'patience shall have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.'" — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 224.

This sermon was written but a short time before his death. (See Tyerman, vol. i. p. 498.)

"But do you believe we are sanctified by faith? We know you believe that we are justified by faith; but do not you believe, and accordingly teach, that we are sanctified by our works? So it has been roundly and vehemently affirmed for these five and twenty years; but I have constantly declared just the contrary; and that in all manner of ways. I have continually testified in private and in public, that we are sanctified as well as justified by faith. And indeed the one of those great truths does exceedingly illustrate the other. Exactly as we are justified by faith, so are we sanctified by faith. Faith is the condition, and the only condition of sanctification, exactly as it is of justification. It is the *condition:* none is sanctified but he that believes; without faith no man is sanctified. And it is the *only condition:* this alone is sufficient for sanctification. Every one that believes is sanctified, whatever else he has or has not. In other words, no man is sanctified till he believes: every man when he believes is sanctified." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 388.

To Miss Furly, in 1756: —

"Probably the difference between you and others lies in words chiefly. All who expect to be sanctified at all, expect to be sanctified by faith. But, meantime, they know, that faith will not be given but to them that obey. Remotely, therefore, the blessing depends on our works; although immediately, on simple faith." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 710.

To Mrs. A. F., in 1764: —

"That great truth, 'that we are saved by faith,' will never be worn out; and that sanctifying as well as justifying faith is the free gift of God. Now, with God one day is as a thousand years. It plainly follows, that the quantity of time is nothing to him: Centuries, years, months, days, hours, and moments are exactly the same. Consequently, He can as well sanctify in a day after we are justified, as a hundred years. There is no difference at all, unless we suppose Him to be such a one as ourselves. Accordingly we see, in fact, that some of the most unquestionable witnesses of sanctifying grace were sanctified within a few days after they were justified. I have seldom known so devoted a soul, as S—— H——, at Macclesfield, who was sanctified within nine days after she was convinced of sin. She was then twelve years old, and I believed was never afterward heard to speak an improper word, or known to do an improper thing. Her look struck an awe into all that saw her. She is now in Abraham's bosom.

"Although, therefore, it usually pleases God to interpose some time between justification and sanctification, yet, it is expressly observed in the 'Farther Thoughts,' we must not fancy this to be an invariable rule. All who think this, must think we are sanctified by works, or which comes to the same, by sufferings: for, otherwise, what is time necessary for? It must be either to do or to suffer. Whereas, if

nothing be required but simple faith, a moment is as good as an age." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 14.

To Mrs. Elizabeth Bennis, in 1767: —

"The essential part of Christian holiness is giving the heart wholly to God; and certainly we need not lose any degree of that light and love which at first attend this: it is our own infirmity if we do; it is not the will of the Lord concerning us. Your present business is, not to reason whether you should call your experience thus or thus; but to go straight to Him that loves you, with all your wants, how great or how many soever they are. Then all things are ready; help, while you ask, is given. You have only to receive it by simple faith. Nevertheless, you will still be encompassed with numberless infirmities; for you live in a house of clay, and therefore this corruptible body will, more or less, press down the soul, yet not so as to prevent your rejoicing evermore, and having a witness that your heart is His." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 51.

To his brother Charles, in 1772: —

"I find by long experience it comes exactly to the same point, to tell men they shall be saved from all sin when they die; or to tell them it may be a year hence, or a week hence, or any time but *now*. Our word does not profit, either as to justification or sanctification, unless we can bring them to expect the blessing *while we speak*." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 673.

To Robert Carr Brackenbury, in 1780: —

"May He still guide you in the way you should go, and enable you to give Him your whole heart! You must not set the great blessing afar off, because you find much war within. Perhaps this will not abate, but rather increase, till the moment your heart is set at liberty. The war will

not cease *before* you attain, but *by* your attaining, the promise. And if you look for it by *naked* faith, why may you not receive it *now?* The cheerfulness of faith you should aim at in and above all things. Wishing you a continual supply of righteousness, peace, and joy." — *Works,* vol. vii. p. 149.

To Miss H. A. Roe, in 1782: —

"In the success of Mr. Leech's preaching, we have one proof of a thousand, that the blessing of God always attends the publishing of full salvation as attainable now, by simple faith. You should always have in readiness that little tract, "The Plain Account of Christian Perfection." There is nothing that would so effectually stop the mouths of those who call this 'a new doctrine.' All who thus object are really (though they suspect nothing less) seeking sanctification by works. If it be by works, then certainly these will need time, in order to the doing of these works. But if it is by faith, it is plain, a moment is as a thousand years. Then God says (in the spiritual, as in the outward world), 'Let there be light, and there is light.'" — *Works,* vol. vii. p. 195.

To Miss Loxdale, in 1782: —

"By experience, the strongest of all arguments, you have been once and again convinced, that salvation from inbred sin is received by simple faith, although it is certain there is a gradual work both preceding and following.

"Is it not then your wisdom not willingly to converse with any that oppose this great and important truth? If you play with fire, will you not be burned, sooner or later? Nay, have you not been burned already?" — *Works,* vol. vii. p. 222.

"As to manner, I believe this perfection is *always* wrought in the soul by a *simple act of faith;* consequently *in an in*

stant." He further says: "Look for it every day, every hour, every moment. Why not this hour — this moment? Certainly you may look for it now, if you believe it is by faith. And by this token you may surely know whether you seek it by faith or by works. If by *works*, you want something to be *done* first before you are sanctified. You think, *I must be or do thus or thus. Then you are seeking it by works unto this day.* If you seek it by *faith*, *you expect it as you are;* and if as you are, then expect it now. It is important to observe that there is an inseparable connection between these three points — *expect it by faith, expect it as you are, and expect it now.* TO DENY ONE IS TO DENY THEM ALL." — *Sermons,* vol. i. p. **391.**

SECTION X.

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT TO ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION.

"NONE, therefore, ought to believe that the work is done till there is added the testimony of the Spirit witnessing his entire sanctification *as clearly as his justification.*" — *Plain Account*, p. 79.

"Some have the testimony both of their justification and sanctification, without any intermission at all, which, I presume, more might have, *did they walk humbly* and *closely with God.*" — *Wesley's Plain Account*, p. 122.

"Indeed, the witness of sanctification is not always clear at first (as neither is that of justification); neither is it afterward always the same, but, like that of justification, sometimes stronger and sometimes fainter. Yea, and sometimes it is withdrawn. Yet, in general, the *latter testimony* of the *Spirit* is both as *clear* and as *steady* as the former." — *Plain Account*, p. 119.

"There are now about twenty persons here, who believe they are saved from sin: 1. Because they always love, pray, rejoice, and give thanks; and, 2. Because *they have the witness of it in themselves.* But, if these lose what they have received, nothing will be more easy than to think they never had it. There were four hundred (to speak at the lowest) in London, who (unless they told me lies) had the same experience. If near half of these have lost what

they had received, I do not wonder if they think they never had it: it is so ready a way of excusing themselves for throwing away the blessed gift of God." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 768.

"Having desired that as many as could of the neighboring towns, who believe that they were saved from sin, would meet me, I spent the greatest part of the day in examining them one by one. The testimony of some I could not receive: but concerning the far greatest part, it is plain (unless they could be supposed to tell wilful and deliberate lies), 1. That they feel no inward sin, and, to the best of their knowledge, commit no outward sin; 2. That they see and love God every moment, and pray, rejoice, give thanks evermore; 3. *That they have constantly as clear a witness from God of sanctification as they have of justification.* Now, in this I do rejoice, and will rejoice, call it what you please." — *Works*, vol. iv. p. 56.

"As soon as Mr. Fugill began to speak, I felt my soul was all love. I was so stayed on God as I never felt before, and knew that I loved him with all my heart. When I came home I could ask for nothing; I could only give thanks. *And the witness, that God had saved me from all my sins, grew clearer every hour.* On Wednesday this was stronger than ever. I have never since found my heart wander from God." — *Journal*, March, 1760.

"Since my last account, many have been sanctified, and several justified. One of the former is William Moor. He was a long time struggling for the blessing; and one night he was resolved not to go to bed without it. He continued wrestling with God for two hours, when he felt a glorious change, and *the Spirit of God witnessing that the work was done.*" — *Journal*, May, 1762.

"Thence I went to Otley. There, also, the work of God

increases, particularly with regard to sanctification. And I think every one who has experienced it, *retains a clear witness of what God has wrought.*" — *Works*, vol. iv. p. 505.

To Miss J. C. M., 1762: —

"When you was justified, you had a direct witness that your sins were forgiven: afterward, this witness was frequently intermitted; and yet you did not doubt of it. In like manner, *you have had a direct witness that you are saved from sin*, and this witness is frequently intermitted; and yet even then you do not doubt of it. But I much doubt if God withdraws either the one witness or the other without some occasion given on our part. I never knew any one receive the abiding witness gradually; therefore I incline to think this also is given in a moment." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 250.

To Mrs. A. F., 1764: —

"In the 'Thoughts on Perfection,' it is observed that, before any can be assured they are saved from sin, they must not only feel no sin, but '*have a direct witness*' of that salvation. And this several have had as clear as S—— R—— has, who afterward fell from that salvation; although S—— R——, to be consistent with her scheme, must deny they ever had it; yea, and must affirm that witness was either from nature or from the devil. If it was really from God, is He well pleased with this?" — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 15.

To Miss J. C. M., 1764: —

"You are a living witness of two great truths: The one, that there cannot be a lasting, steady enjoyment of pure love *without the direct testimony of the Spirit concerning it;* without God's Spirit shining on His own work: the other, that setting perfection too high is the ready way to drive it out of the world." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 250.

"About two in the afternoon, I preached at Potto, and in the evening at Hutton-Rudby. Here is the largest society in these parts, and the most alive to God. After spending some time with them all, I met those apart who believe they are saved from sin. I was agreeably surprised. I think not above two, out of sixteen or seventeen whom I examined, have lost the *direct witness* of that salvation ever since they experienced it." — *Journal*, July, 1766.

To Mrs. Elizabeth Bennis, 1766: —

"One of our preachers has lately advanced *a new position among us*, — that there is no direct or immediate witness of sanctification, but only a perception or consciousness that we are changed, filled with love, and cleansed from sin. But, if I understand you right, you find a direct testimony that you are a child of God." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 50.

To Rev. John Mason, 1768: —

"If any deny the *witness of sanctification*, and occasion disputing in the select society, let him or her meet therein no more." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 96.

"I rode to Derry-Anvil, where are some of the liveliest Christians I have seen in the kingdom. Eight of them I examined closely, who testified that they had *never lost the witness*, nor felt any decay, since the hour they were perfected in love." — *Journal*, June, 1773.

"I met such a select society (at Whitby) as I have not seen since I left London. They were about forty, of whom I did not find one who had not *a clear witness* of being saved from inbred sin. Several of them had lost it for a season, but could never rest till they had recovered it. And every one of them seemed now to walk in the full light of God's countenance." — *Journal*, June, 1784.

SECTION XI.

MR. WESLEY ENCOURAGED THE PROFESSION OF CHRISTIAN HOLINESS.

"It requires a great degree of watchfulness to retain the perfect love of God; and *one great means of retaining it, is frankly to declare what God has given you,* and earnestly to exhort *all the believers you meet with, to follow after full salvation.*" — Vol. ii. p. 13.

"Mr. Wesley came to Macclesfield, and I saw and conversed with him for the first time. He behaved to me with parental tenderness, and greatly rejoiced in the Lord's goodness to my soul; encouraged me to hold fast *and to declare what the Lord had wrought.*" — *Journal of H. A. Rogers.*

"At the love-feast, Mr. C. related the manner how God perfected him in love, — *a testimony which is always attended with a peculiar blessing.*" — Vol. iv. p. 458.

"A few *witnesses* of pure love remain there still, but several are gone to Abraham's bosom. Encourage those in Macclesfield who enjoy it *to speak explicitly what they do experience;* and to go on till they know all that 'love of God that passeth knowledge.'" — *Letter to H. Ann Rogers.*

"By silence, he might avoid many *crosses* which will naturally and necessarily ensue if he *simply declare,* even among believers, what God has wrought in his soul. If, therefore, such a one were to *confer* with *flesh* and *blood,* he would be

entirely silent. But this *could not be done with a clear conscience,* for undoubtedly he ought to speak." — Vol. vi. p. 502.

"Undoubtedly it would be a cross to *declare what God has done for your soul;* nay, and afterward Satan would accuse you on the account, telling you, 'You did it out of pride.' Yea, and some of your *sisters would blame you,* and perhaps put the same construction upon it. Nevertheless, if you do it with a single eye it will be *well pleasing to God.*" — Vol. vii. p. 103.

"Nor does anything under heaven more quicken the *desires* of those who are justified, than to converse with those whom they believe to have *experienced a still higher salvation.*" — Vol. vi. p. 502.

"Several then did speak, and not in vain (at Bristol) The flame ran from heart to heart, especially while one was declaring, with all simplicity, the manner wherein God, during the morning sermon (on those words, 'I will, be thou clean'), had set her soul at full liberty. Two men also spoke to the same effect; and two others who had found peace with God. We then joyfully poured out our souls before God, and praised Him for His marvellous works." — *Journal,* July, 1761.

"I rode to Tadcaster, and preached within, the rain not suffering us to be abroad, as I intended. In the evening, I preached at Otley, and afterwards talked with many of the society. There is reason to believe that ten or twelve of these are filled with the love of God. I found one or two more the next day at Fewston, a few miles north of Otley (where I preached at noon), whom God had raised up to witness the same good confession. And, indeed, the whole congregation seemed just ripe for receiving all the promises." — *Journal,* July, 1761.

"I visited the classes, and wondered to find no witness of

the great salvation. Surely the flame which is kindled in Dublin will not stop there. The next evening God did, indeed, kindle it here; a cry went up on every side; and the lively believers seemed all on fire to be 'cleansed from all unrighteousness.'" — *Journal*, June, 1762.

"One of our brethren was constrained openly to declare he believed God had wrought this change in him. I trust he will not lightly cast away the gift which God has given him. In the morning I left them rejoicing and praising God, and rode to Monaghan." — *Journal*, April, 1762.

"For about three years he (Joseph Norbury) has *humbly* and *boldly testified* that God had saved him from *all sin*." — Vol. ii. p. 297.

To his brother Charles, 1766: —

"You are a long time in getting to London; therefore, I hope you will do much good there. 'Yes,' says William; 'Mr. Charles will stop their prating in the bands at London, as he has done at Bristol.' I believe not. I believe you will rather encourage them to speak, humbly and modestly, the words of truth and soberness. Great good has flowed and will flow therefrom. Let your 'knowledge direct, not quench, the fire.' That has been done too much already. I trust you will now raise, not depress, their hopes." — *Works*, vol vi. p. 668.

To Mrs. Elizabeth Bennis, 1766: —

"Now, certainly, if God has given you this light, He did not intend that you should hide it under a bushel. 'It is good to conceal the secrets of a king, but it is good to tell the loving-kindness of the Lord.' Every one ought to declare what God has done for his soul, and that with all simplicity; only care is to be taken to declare to several persons that part of our experience which they are severally able to

bear: and some parts of it, to such alone as are upright and simple of heart.

"One reason why those who are saved from sin should freely declare it to believers is, because nothing is a stronger incitement to them to seek after the same blessing. And we ought, by every possible means, to press every serious believer to forget the things which are behind, and with all earnestness go on to perfection. Indeed, if they are not thirsting after this, it is scarcely possible to keep what they have: they can hardly retain any power of faith, if they are not panting after holiness." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 50.

"Saturday, 15, rode to Derry-Anvil, a little village out of all road, surrounded with bogs, just like my old parish of Wroote, in Lincolnshire. The congregation, however, was exceeding large and exceeding lively. I talked largely with several of them who believe they are saved from sin, and found no cause to disbelieve them: and I met with many more in these parts who witness the same confession." — *Journal*, April, 1769.

To Mrs. Mary Savage, 1771: —

"O exhort all whom you have access to, not to delay the time of embracing all the great and precious promises! Frankly tell all those that are simple of heart, what He has done for your soul." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 127.

To Miss Chapman, 1773: —

"You can never speak too strongly or explicitly upon the head of Christian perfection. If you speak only faintly and indirectly, none will be offended, and none profited. But if you speak out, although some will probably be angry, yet others will soon find the power of God unto salvation." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 254.

"At our love-feast in the evening (at Redruth), several of

our friends declared how God had saved them from inbred sin, with such exactness, both of sentiment and language, as clearly showed they were taught of God." — *Journal*, Sept., 1785.

"We had afterwards a love-feast (at Epworth market-place), at which a flame was soon kindled; which was greatly increased while Mr. Cundy related the manner how God perfected him in love: a testimony which is always attended with a peculiar blessing." — *Journal*, July, 1776.

"In the evening we had a love-feast (at Bristol Room), at which Mrs. Fletcher simply declared her present experience. I know no one that is so changed for the better in a few years, even in her manner of speaking. It is now smooth, easy, and natural, even when the sense is deep and strong." — *Journal*, March, 1787.

To Mrs. Mary Savage, 1772: —

"It is easy to see the difference between those two things, sinfulness and helplessness. The former you need feel no more; the latter you will feel as long as you live. And indeed the nearer you draw to God, the more sensible of it you will be. But beware this does not bring you into the least doubt of what God has done for your soul. And beware it does not make you a jot the least forward to speak of it with all simplicity." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 128.

To Miss H. A. Roe, 1782: —

"I am in great hopes, as J. S. got his own soul much quickened in Macclesfield, he will now be a blessing to many at Chester. A few witnesses of pure love remain there still; but several are gone to Abraham's bosom. Encourage those in M. who enjoy it, to speak explicitly what they do experience; and to go on, till they know all that 'love of God that passeth knowledge." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 195.

"In the evening (at Macclesfield) we had a love-feast; and such an one as I had not seen for many years. Sixteen or eighteen persons gave a clear, Scriptural testimony of being renewed in love. And many others told what God had done for their souls, with inimitable simplicity." — *Journal*, April, 1782.

To Mr. John King, 1787: —

"It requires a great degree of watchfulness to retain the perfect love of God; and one great means of retaining it is, frankly to declare what God has given you, and earnestly to exhort all the believers you meet with to follow after full salvation." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 13.

SECTION XII.

WITNESSES OF ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION.

"We have known a large number of persons, of every age and sex, from early childhood to extreme old age, who have given all the proofs, which the nature of the thing admits, that they were 'sanctified throughout;' 'cleansed from all pollution both of flesh and spirit,' that they 'loved the Lord their God with all their heart, and mind, and soul, and strength;' that they continually presented their souls and bodies 'a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God;' in consequence of which, they 'rejoiced evermore, prayed wihout ceasing, and in everything gave thanks.' And this is no other, is what we believe to be true, Scriptural sanctification." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 247.

"Agreeably to this is the plain matter-of-fact. Several persons have enjoyed this blessing, without any interruption, for many years. Several enjoy it at this day. And not a few have enjoyed it unto their death, as they have declared with their latest breath; calmly witnessing that God had saved them from all sin, till their spirit returned to God." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 174.

To Miss Elizabeth Hardy, 1761: —

"The plain fact is this: I know many who love God with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength. He is their one desire, their one delight, and they are continually happy in Him. They love their neighbor as themselves. They feel

as sincere, fervent, constant a desire for the happiness of every man, good or bad, friend or enemy, as for their own. They 'rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks.' Their souls are continually streaming up to God in holy joy, prayer, and praise. This is plain, sound, Scriptural experience: and of this we have more and more living witnesses." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 737.

"After meeting the Society, I talked with a sensible woman, whose experience seemed peculiar. She said: 'A few days before Easter last, I was deeply convinced of sin; and in Easter week I knew that my sins were forgiven, and was filled with 'joy and peace in believing.' But in about eighteen days I was convinced, in a dream, of the necessity of a higher salvation; and I mourned day and night, in agony of desire, to be thoroughly sanctified, till, on the twenty-third day after my justification, I found a total change, together with a clear witness that the blood of Jesus had cleansed me from all unrighteousness." — *Journal*, June 23, 1761.

"In the evening I spoke to those at Manchester who believed that God had *cleansed* their hearts. They were *sixty-three* in number, to about sixty of whom I could not find there was any reasonable objection." — Vol. vii. p. 381.

To Mr. Furley, 1762: —

"For me, I shall only once more state the case. There are forty or fifty people, who declare (and I can take their word, for I know them well), each for himself, 'God has enabled me to rejoice evermore, and to pray and give thanks without ceasing. I feel no pride, no anger, no desire, no unbelief, but pure love alone.' . . . Here is a plain fact. You may dispute, reason, cavil about, just as long as you please. Meantime, I know, by all manner of proof, that these are the happiest and holiest people in the kingdom.

Their light shines before men." — *Methodist Magazine*, 1856, p. 988.

"That many of these did not retain the gift of God, is no proof that it was not given them. That many do retain it to this day, is matter of praise and thanksgiving. And many of them are gone to Him whom they loved, praising Him with their latest breath; just in the spirit of Ann Steed, the first witness in Bristol of the great salvation; who, being worn out with sickness and racking pain, after she had commended to God all that were round her, lifted up her eyes, cried aloud, 'Glory! Hallelujah!' and died." — *Journal*, Oct. 1762.

"I buried the remains of Joseph Norbury, a faithful witness of Jesus Christ. For about three years he has humbly and boldly testified, that God had saved him from all sin: and his whole spirit and behaviour in life and death made his testimony beyond exception." — *Journal*, Dec., 1763

"I buried the remains of Thomas Salmon, a good and useful man. What was peculiar in his experience was, he did not know when he was justified; but he did know when he was renewed in love, that work being wrought in a most distinct manner. After this he continued about a year in constant love, joy, and peace; then, after an illness of a few days, he cheerfully went to God." — *Journal*, Feb., 1764.

To his brother Charles, 1766: —

"That perfection which I believe, I can boldly preach; because, I think I see five hundred witnesses of it." — *Works*, English edition, vol. xii. p. 122.

"In the evening I preached in the house at Wednesbury, a funeral sermon for Elizabeth Longmore; I think the first witness of Christian perfection whom God raised up in these parts. I gave some account of her experience many years ago. From that time her whole life was answerable

to her profession, every way holy and unblamable. Frequently she had not bread to eat; but that did not hinder her 'rejoicing evermore.'" — *Journal*, March, 1770.

"I assisted at the funeral of Susanna Pilson. She was one of the first members of this society, and continued firm in the hottest of the persecution. Upwards of twenty years she adorned the Gospel, steadily and uniformly walking with God. For a great part of the time she was a living witness, that 'the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.' After a lingering illness, she camly resigned her soul into tne hands of her faithful Creator." — *Journal*, May, 1771.

"From the very time of her justification, she (Susannah Spencer) clearly saw the necessity of being wholly sanctified; and found an unspeakable hunger and thirst after the full image of God; and in the year 1772, God answered her desire. The second change was wrought in as strong and distinct a manner as the first had been." — *Journal*, Oct., 1774.

"I returned to London, and Sunday, 11th, buried the remains of Eleanor Lee. I believe she received the great promise of God, entire sanctification, fifteen or sixteen years ago, and that she never lost it for an hour. I conversed intimately with her ever since, and never saw her do any action, little or great, nor heard her speak any word, which I could reprove. Thou wast indeed, 'a mother in Israel!'" — *Journal*, Oct., 1778.

"In the afternoon, I preached a funeral sermon for Mary Charlton, an Israelite indeed. From the hour she first knew the pardoning love of God, she never lost sight of it for a moment. Eleven years ago, she believed that God had cleansed her from all sin; and she showed that she had not believed in vain, by her holy and unblamable conversation." — *Journal*, May, 1781.

To L. Caughland, 1768: —

"Blessed be God, though we set an hundred enthusiasts aside, we are still 'encompassed with a cloud of witnesses,' who have testified, and do testify, in life and in death, that perfection which I have taught these forty years! This perfection cannot be a delusion, unless the Bible be a delusion too; I mean, 'loving God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves.' I pin down all its opposers to this definition of it. No evasion! No shifting the question! Where is the delusion of this? Either you received this love, or you did not; if you did, dare you call it a delusion? You will not call it so for all the world. If you received anything else, it does not at all affect the question."—*Journal*, Aug., 1768.

SECTION XIII.

THE NECESSITY OF PREACHING HOLINESS.

Dr. STEVENS, in his "History of Methodism," says of the early Methodist preachers: —

"Every one of them, at his reception into the traveling ministry, avowed his belief in the doctrine, and that he was 'groaning' after, if he had not already attained, this exalted grace. *Perhaps no single fact affords a better explanation of the marvelous success of Methodism.*

"Wesley observed and declared that wherever it was preached, revivals usually prevailed. 'It is,' he said, 'the grand depositum which God has given to the people called Methodist, and chiefly to propagate this, it appears, God raised them up. Their mission was not to form a religious party, but to spread holiness over these lands.' The doctrine of personal sanctification was, in fine, the great potential idea of Methodism. . . . These holy men, in making an entire public sacrifice of themselves, did so as a part of an entire consecration to God, *for the purpose of their own entire sanctification*, as well as their usefulness to others." — *History of Methodism*, vol. ii. p. 406.

"Therefore let *all* our preachers make a point to *preach* of perfection to believers *constantly, strongly, explicitly.*" . . . "*I doubt not we are not explicit enough in speaking on full sanctification, either in public or private.*" — Vol. vi. p. 529.

"In the present dispensation, he is undoubtedly aiming

at that point, to spread holiness over the land. It is our wisdom to have this always in view, inward and outward holiness. A thousand things will be presented by men and devils, to divert us from our point. These we are to watch against continually; as they will be continually changing their shape. But let your eye be single; aim still at one thing; — holy, loving faith; giving God the whole heart. And incite all to this; one love, one present and eternal heaven." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 778.

"The more I converse with the believers in Cornwall, the more I am convinced that they have sustained great loss, for want of hearing the doctrine of Christian perfection clearly and strongly enforced. I see, wherever this is not done, the believers grow dead and cold. Nor can this be prevented, but by keeping up in them an hourly expectation of being perfected in love. I say an hourly expectation; for to expect it at death, or some time hence, is much the same as not expecting it at all." — *Journal*, Sept. 1762.

To Mr. Merryweather, 1766: —

"Where Christian perfection is not strongly and explicitly preached, there is seldom any remarkable blessing from God; and, consequently, little to the society, and little life in the members of it. Therefore, if Jacob Rowell is grown faint, and says but little about it, do *you* supply his lack of service. Speak, and spare not. Let not regard for any man induce you to betray the truth of God. Till you press the believers to expect full salvation *now*, you must not look for any revival." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 761.

To Charles Wesley, 1766: —

"Insist everywhere on full redemption receivable now, by faith alone! consequently, to be looked for now. You are made, as it were, for this very thing. Just here you are

in your element. . . . Press the *instantaneous blessing*, and then I shall have more time for my peculiar calling, enforcing the gradual work." — *Works*, English edition, vol. xii. p. 122.

To John Bredin: —

"By foolish complaisance, our preachers in Scotland have often done harm. Be all a Methodist; and strongly insist on *full salvation* to be received *now*, by *simple faith*." — *Wesleyan Times*, May, 1761.

To Mrs. Crosby, 1766: —

"Do they gain ground in London? I am afraid [Christian] perfection should be forgotten. Encourage Richard Blackwell and Mr. Colley to speak plainly, and to press believers to the constant pursuit, and earnest expectation, of it. A general faintness, in this respect, is fallen upon the whole kingdom. Sometimes I seem almost weary of striving against the stream of both preachers and people." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 29.

To Miss Bosanquet (afterward Mrs. Fletcher), 1767:

"You judge right. I never knew, till you wrote me word, that Richard Taylor had been at Leytonstone at all. At this conference, it will be determined whether all our preachers, or none, shall continually insist upon Christian perfection." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 60.

To Miss Jane Hilton, 1769: —

"I believe you may speak without reserve to brother Howard. He is a cool, thinking man. But does he preach Christian perfection clearly and explicitly? Which of your other preachers does?" — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 43.

To Mrs. Rev. John Fletcher, 1770: —

"I am glad Richard Taylor is of use. He will be more

and more so, if he continues simple of heart, and speaks explicitly of full redemption, and exhorts believers to accept it *now!* The same rule, it will be well for you to observe in conversation with all that are in earnest. Peace be with your spirit!" — *Works,* vol. vii. p. 62.

"I hope he is not ashamed to preach full salvation, receivable now, by faith. This is the word which God will always bless, and which the devil peculiarly hates; therefore, he is constantly stirring up both his own children, and the weak children of God, against it." — *Letter to Mrs. Bennis,* 1771.

To his brother Charles, 1772: —

"I find almost all our preachers, in every circuit, have done with Christian perfection. They say, they believe it; but they never preach it; or not once in a quarter. What is to be done? Shall we let it drop, or make a point of it?" — *Works,* vol. vi. p. 673.

To Rev. F. Wolf, 1772: —

"Let both of you strongly exhort the believers every where, to 'go on to perfection;' otherwise, they cannot keep what they have." — *Works,* vol. vii. p. 122.

To Rev. Samuel Beardsley, 1772: —

"Dear Sammy, — It is a great blessing that your fellow-laborers and you are all of one mind. When that is so, the work of the Lord will prosper in your hands. It will go on widening, as well as deepening, while you draw in one yoke. If you desire it should deepen in believers, continually exhort them to go on unto perfection; steadily to use all the grace they have received, and every moment to expect full salvation. The "Plain Account of Christian Perfection," you should read yourself, more than once, and recommend it to all that are groaning for full redemption." — *Works,* vol. vii. p. 129.

To Miss Pywell, 1773: —

"One part of your work, is to stir up all who have believed to go on to perfection, and every moment to expect the full salvation which is received by simple faith." — Vol. vii. p. 36.

To Mrs. Jane Barton, 1774: —

"I am glad sister Crosby has been at Beverley, and that you had an opportunity of hearing her. She is useful wheresoever she goes; particularly in exciting believers to go on to perfection." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 46.

To Miss Ritchie, 1774: —

"And one means of retaining the pure love of God is, the exhorting others to press earnestly after it. When you meet on a Sunday morning, I doubt not but this will be the chief matter both of your prayers and conversation. You may then expect to be more and more abundantly endued with power from on high; witnessing that He is faithful and just both to forgive us our sins, and also to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 173.

To Rev. Joseph Benson, 1774: —

"I am glad you 'press all believers' to aspire after the full liberty of the children of God. They must not give up their faith, in order to do this: herein you formerly seemed to be in some mistake. Let them go on from faith to faith; from weak faith, to that strong faith, which not only conquers but casts out sin. Meantime it is certain, many call themselves believers who do not even conquer sin; who are strangers to the whole inward kingdom of God, and void of the whole fruit of the Spirit." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 74.

"Wednesday, 14. — I preached at Tiverton; and on Thursday went on to Launceston. Here I found the plain reason, why the work of God had gained no ground in this circuit

all the year. The preachers had given up the Methodist testimony. Either they did not speak of perfection at all (the peculiar doctrine committed to our trust), or they spoke of it only in general terms, without urging the believers to 'go on unto perfection,' and to expect it every moment. And wherever this is not earnestly done, the work of God does not prosper." — *Journal*, Aug., 1776.

To Rev. Zechariah Tewdall, 1779: —

"Wherever you are, be ready to acknowledge what God has done for your soul; and earnestly exhort all the believers to expect full salvation." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 154.

"Edinburgh, Thursday, 17, I examined the society. In five years I found five members had been gained! Ninety-nine being increased to a hundred and four. What then have our preachers been doing all this time? 1. They have preached four evenings in the week, and on Sunday morning; the other mornings they have fairly given up. 2. They have taken great care not to speak too plain, lest they should give offense. 3. When Mr. Brackenbury preached the old Methodist doctrine, one of them said, 'You must not preach such doctrine here. The doctrine of perfection is not calculated for the meridian of Edinburgh.' Waiving then all other hinderances, is it any wonder, that the work of God has not prospered here?" — *Journal*, June, 1779.

To Mr. Robert Hopkins, 1781: —

"It is good for you to hold fast what you have attained, and to be continually aspiring after this; and you will never find more life in your own soul, than when you are earnestly exhorting others to go on unto perfection. Many will blame you for doing it; but regard not that: go on through honor and dishonor. 'This one thing I do,' is your motto." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 252.

"I earnestly, desire, that all our preachers would seriously consider the preceding account (Rev. Alexander Mather's experience), and let them not be content, never to speak against *the great salvation*, either in public or private; and never to discourage either by word, or deed, any that think they have attained it. No; but prudently encourage them to hold fast whereunto they have attained, and strongly and explicitly exhort all believers to go on to perfection; yea, to expect full salvation from sin every moment, by mere grace, through simple faith." — *Arminian Magazine*, Jan., 1780.

To Rev. Samuel Beardsley, 1775: —

"The more pains you take the more blessing you will find; especially in preaching full salvation, receivable now, by faith."

"Exhort all the believers, strongly and explicitly, to go on to perfection, and to expect every blessing God has promised, not to-morrow, but to-day."

"Everywhere exhort the believers to expect full salvation now by simple faith."

To Miss Ritchie, 1782: —

"That point, entire salvation from inbred sin, can hardly ever be insisted upon, either in preaching or prayer, without a particular blessing. Honest Isaac Brown firmly believes this doctrine, that we are to be saved from all sin in this life. But I wish, when opportunity serves, you would encourage him, 1. To preach Christian perfection, constantly, strongly, and explicitly: 2. Explicitly to assert and prove, that it may be received now; and, 3. (which indeed is implied therein), that it is to be received by simple faith." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 181.

To Rev. Joseph Benson, 1782: —

"I have no objection to your printing a few copies of

those two sermons, to oblige your friends in the neighborhood. I doubt we are not explicit enough, in speaking on full sanctification, either in public or private." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 81.

To Rev. Robert Hopkins, 1784: —

"The return you are to make for the blessings you have received, is to declare them to all mankind; and to exhort all believers, strongly and explicitly, to go on to perfection. You never *need* lose what you now experience; but may increase therein till your spirit returns to God." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 252.

To Rev. A. Clark, 1786: —

"You do well insisting upon full and present salvation, whether men will hear or forbear." — Vol. vii. p. 203.

In 1790, two years before Mr. Wesley died, he wrote to Robert Carr Brackenbury, Esq.: —

"I am glad brother D—— has more light with regard to full sanctification. This doctrine is the grand despositum which God has lodged with the people called Methodists; and for the sake of propagating this chiefly He appeared to have raised us up." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 153.

To Rev. John Booth, in 1791, two months before Mr. Wesley's death: —

"Wherever you have opportunity of speaking to believers, urge them to go on to perfection. Spare no pains; and God, our own God, still give you His blessing." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 238.

SECTION XIV.

MR. WESLEY FREQUENTLY PREACHED ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

"It is the grand *depositum* which God has given to the people called Methodists; and *chiefly to propagate this*, it appears God raised them up." . . . "We believe that God's design in raising up the preachers called Methodists in America was to reform the continent, and *spread Scriptural holiness over these lands.*" — *Methodist Discipline.*

"In September, 1738, when I returned from Germany, I exhorted all I could to follow after that great salvation, which is through faith in the blood of Christ; waiting for it, 'in all the ordinances of God,' and in 'doing good, as they had opportunity, to all men.'" — *Journal.*

"My brother and I set out for Tiverton. About eleven I preached at Burford. On Saturday evening I explained, at Bristol, the nature and extent of Christian perfection." — *Journal,* Nov., 1739.

"We had an uncommon blessing, at Manchester, both morning and afternoon. In the evening I met the believers, and strongly exhorted them to 'go on unto perfection.' To many of them it seemed a new doctrine. However, they all received it in love; and a flame was kindled, which I trust neither men nor devils shall ever be able to quench." — *Journal,* April, 1761.

"I preached at seven on, 'Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst

make me clean.' And oh, what a flame did God kindle! Many were 'on fire, to be dissolved in love.'" — *Journal*, July, 1761.

"I came to London. I found the same spirit which I left here, both in the morning and evening service. Monday, 2, at five, I began a course of sermons on Christian perfection." —*Journal*, November, 1761.

"A large congregation attended at five in the morning, and seemed to be just ripe for the exhortation, 'Let us go on unto perfection.' I had, indeed, the satisfaction of finding most of the believers here athirst for full redemption." — *Journal*, April, 1764.

"Hence we rode to Grimsby, once the most dead, now the most lively, place in all the county. Here has been a large and swift increase both of the society and hearers, so that the house, though galleries are added, is still too small. In the morning, Wednesday, 4, I explained at large the nature of Christian perfection. Many who had doubted of it before were fully satisfied. It remains only to *experience* what we believe." — *Journal*, April, 1764.

At seven I clearly and strongly described the height and depth of Christian holiness; and (what is strange) I could not afterward find that any person was offended. — *Journal*, Nov., 1764.

"At five in the morning, I began a course of sermons on Christian perfection; if haply that thirst after it might return which was so general a few years ago. Since that time, how deeply have we grieved the Holy Spirit of God! Yet two or three have lately received His pure love; and a few more are brought to the birth." — *Journal*, Dec., 1767.

Sarah Crosby writes to Miss Bosanquet, in 1770: "Mr. Wesley left Leeds yesterday. I never heard him

preach better, if so well. In every sermon he set forth 'Christian perfection' in the most beautiful light." — *Tyerman*, vol. iii. p. 68.

"In the evening, the house at Swinfleet not being able to contain a third of the congregation, I preached on a smooth, green place, sheltered from the wind, on Heb. vii. 25. Many rejoiced to hear of being 'saved to the uttermost,' the very thing which their souls longed after." — *Journal*, July, 1770.

"The next evening (at Macclesfield) I preached on Heb. xii. 14: 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' I was enabled to make a close application, chiefly to those that expected to be saved by faith. I hope none of them will hereafter dream of going to heaven by any faith which does not produce holiness. — *Journal*, April, 1777."

"Forty years ago, I knew and preached every Christian doctrine which I now preach." — *Journal*, Sept. 1778.

"About ten, I preached at New Mills, to as simple a people as those at Chapel. Perceiving they had suffered much by not having the doctrine of perfection clearly explained, and strongly pressed upon them, I preached expressly on the head; and spoke to the same effect in meeting the society. The spirits of many greatly revived; and they are now 'going on unto perfection.' I found it needful to press the same thing at Stockport, in the evening." — *Journal*, April, 1782.

"In the evening, I exhorted them all to expect pardon or holiness, *to-day*, and not *to-morrow*. O, let their love never grow cold!" — *Journal*, May, 1783.

"*Friday*, 6, being the quarterly day for meeting the local preachers, between twenty and thirty of them met at West Street, and opened their hearts to each other. Taking the opportunity of having them all together, at the watch-

night, I strongly insisted on St. Paul's advice to Timothy, 'Keep that which is committed to thy trust;' particularly the doctrine of Christian perfection, which God has peculiarly entrusted to the Methodists." —*Journal,* Feb. 1789.

"At nine I preached in the new chapel, at Tunstal; the most elegant I have seen since I left Bath. My text was, 'Let us go on unto pefection;' and the people seemed to devour the word." —*Journal,* April, 1790.

"We went to Wigan, for many years proverbially called *wicked Wigan.* But it is not now what it was. The inhabitants in general, have taken a softer mould. The house, in the evening, was more than filled; and all that could get in, seemed to be greatly affected, while I strongly applied our Lord's words, 'I will: be thou clean.'" —*Journal,* May, 1790.

"If I were convinced that none in England had attained what has been so strongly and clearly preached by such *a number of preachers, in so many* places, and for so long a time, I should be clearly convinced that we had all mistaken the meaning of those Scriptures." —*Plain Account,* p. 88.

The instances given are only a specimen of what runs all through his journals. In the journals of Dr. Adam Clarke, Bramwell, Carvosso, Mrs. Hester Ann Rogers, and Lady Maxwell, where a great number of Mr. Wesley's sermons and texts are noticed, you will find a large proportion of them are on the subject of full salvation, or perfection. More than one half of the hymns composed by Mr. Wesley, were upon the subject of holiness.

SECTION XV.

MR. WESLEY NOT CONFINED TO ANY ONE MODE OF EXPRESSION.

"I HAVE no particular fondness for the term *perfection*. It seldom occurs, either in my preaching or writings. It is my opponents who thrust it upon me continually, and ask me what I mean by it. So did Bishop Gibson, till by his advice I publicly declared what I did not mean by it, and what I did. This, I supposed, might be best done in the form of a sermon, having a text prefixed, wherein that term occurred. But that text is there used, only as an occasion or introduction to the subject. I do not build any doctrine thereupon, nor undertake critically to explain it.

"What is the meaning of perfection? is another question; but that it is a Scriptural term, is undeniable. Therefore, none ought to object to the use of the term, whatever they may do to this or that explication of it. I am very willing to consider whatever you have to object to what is advanced under the first head of that sermon. But I still think that perfection is only another term for holiness, or the image of God in man. 'God made man perfect,' I think, is just the same as, 'He made him holy,' or 'in His own image.'" — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 535.

"The moment a sinner is justified, his heart is cleansed in a low degree; but yet he has not *a clean heart*, in the full, proper sense, till he is made *perfect in love*." — *Journal*, 1744, vol. v. p. 284.

"I spoke, one by one, to the society at Hutton-Rudby. They were about eighty in number; of whom near seventy were believers, and sixteen (probably) *renewed in love.*" — *Journal*, June, 1761.

"We returned to London. Sunday, 29, we had a comfortable love-feast, at which several declared the blessings they had found lately. We need not be careful by what *name* to call them, while the *thing* is beyond dispute. Many have, and many do, daily experience an unspeakable change. After being deeply convinced of inbred sin, particularly of pride, anger, self-will, and unbelief, in a moment they feel all faith and love; no pride, no self-will, or anger. And from that moment, they have continual fellowship with God, always rejoicing, praying, and giving thanks." — *Journal*, Dec., 1761.

"I met again with those who believe God has *delivered them from the root of bitterness.* Their number increases daily. I know not if fifteen or sixteen have not received the blessing this week." — *Journal*, March 23, 1761.

"Monday and Tuesday, I was employed in visiting the classes (in London); and I was much comforted among them. There was such an hunger and thirst in all who had tasted of the grace of God, after a *full renewal in His image.*" — *Journal*, April, 1762.

"Here I found some who had been long laboring in the fire, and toiling to work themselves into *holiness.* To show them a more excellent way, I preached on Rom. x. 6, 7, 8." — *Journal*, July 23, 1762.

On the last day of 1762, Mr. Wesley writes in his journal: "Abundance have been convinced of sin; very many have found peace with God, and in London only I believe, full two hundred have been brought into *glorious liberty.*"

"Many were convinced of sin, many justified, and many backsliders healed. But the peculiar work of the season has been, what St. Paul calls, 'the *perfecting the saints.*'" — *Journal*, 1763.

"A little after preaching, one came to me who believed God had just set her soul *at full liberty.*" — *Journal*, June 6, 1763.

"In the following week, I spoke to each member of the society, and had much satisfaction among them. Concerning several of them, there is all reasonable proof that they have given God all their heart. Many others are groaning after *full salvation;* and all the rest are free from outward blame. Why may not every Christian community come as far as this?" — *Journal*, June, 1765.

"I scarce ever saw the people here (Newcastle) so much alive to God; particularly those who believe they are *saved from sin.* I was ready to say, 'It is good to be here;' but I must not build tabernacles. I am to be a wanderer on earth, and desire no rest till my spirit returns to God." — *Journal*, Aug., 1765.

Letter to Mrs. E. Bennis, 1770: —

"Nothing is more clear, according to the plain Bible account, than *sanctification,*— pure love reigning in the heart and life." — Vol. vii. p. 53.

To Rev. Joseph Benson, 1770: —

"But I have no time to throw away in contending for words especially where the thing is allowed. And you allow the whole thing which I contend for; an entire deliverance from sin, a recovery of the whole image of God, the loving God with all our heart, soul, and strength. And you believe God is able to give you this; yea, to give it you in an instant. You trust He will. Oh, hold fast this also;

this blessed hope, which He has wrought in your heart! And with all zeal and diligence, confirm the brethren,— 1. In holding fast that whereto they have attained; namely, the remission of all their sins, by faith in a bleeding Lord. 2. In expecting a second change, whereby they shall be saved from all sin, and perfected in love.

"If they like to call this 'receiving the Holy Ghost,' they may; only the phrase, in that sense, is not Scriptural, and not quite proper; for they all 'received the Holy Ghost,' when they were justified. God then 'sent forth the Spirit of His Son into their hearts, crying, Abba Father.'" — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 71.

To W. Churchey, 1771: —

"Entire sanctification, or *Christian perfection*, is neither more nor less than pure love; love expelling sin, and governing both the heart and life of a child of God." — Vol. vii. p. 82.

"Wednesday, 26, I preached at the Grange, to a still livelier and larger congregation; but I found the liveliest of all at Derry-Anvil. Six or seven of this little society still rejoice in the *pure love of God*. Thus has God His secret ones, in a little corner of the land, surrounded with bogs, and out of all road." — *Journal*, July, 1771.

"On Saturday a few met at Mr. Hunter's room, who were athirst for *full sanctification*. For this they wrestled with God, till a young man found the blessing, as several others have done since." — *Journal*, June, 1772.

To Miss H. A. Roe, 1776: —

"Your disorder naturally sinks the spirits, and occasions heaviness and dejection. Can you, notwithstanding this, 'rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks?' Certainly before *the root of sin is taken away*, believers may

live above the power of it. Yet what a difference between the first love, and the pure love! You can explain this to Mr. Roe by your own experience. Let him follow on, and how soon may he attain it!" — *Works,* vol. vii. p. 190.

"In the evening I preached at Bradford, where I was well pleased to find many, both men and women, who had never suffered any decay since they were *perfected in love.*" — *Journal,* April, 1780.

To Miss Ritchie, 1782: —

"That point, *entire salvation from inbred sin,* can hardly ever be insisted upon, either in preaching or prayer, without a particular blessing." — Vol. vii. p. 181.

To F. Garretson, 1785: —

"And it will be well, as soon as any of them find peace with God, to exhort them to 'go on to *perfection.*' The more explicitly and strongly you press all believers to aspire after *full sanctification,* as attainable now by simple faith, the more the whole work of God will prosper." — Vol. vii. p. 184.

"There is scarce any expression in Holy Writ, which has given more offense than this, — the word *perfect* is what many cannot bear. The very sound of it is an abomination to them, and whosoever *preaches perfection* (as the phrase is), *i. e.,* asserts that it is attainable in this life, runs great hazard of being accounted by them worse than a heathen man or a publican.

"And hence some have advised, wholly to lay aside the use of those expressions; 'because they have given so great offense.' But are they not found in the oracles of God? If so, by what authority can any messenger of God lay them aside, even though all men should be offended? We have not so learned Christ, neither may we thus give place to

the devil. Whatsoever God hath spoken, that will we speak, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear, know ing, that then alone can any minister of Christ be 'pure from the blood of all men,' when he hath 'not shunned to declare unto them all the counsel of God.'" — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 355.

Mr. Wesley used a great variety of terms expressive of this work, and grace. In those given we have: "Perfect love," "glorious liberty," "the whole image of God," "full salvation," "pure love of God," "second change," "renewed in love," "full sanctification," "holiness," "a clean heart," "entire salvation," "Christian perfection," "perfected in love," "saved from sin," "the root of sin taken away," "sanctification," "full renewal in His image," and "cleansed from all sin." He used the term "renewed in love" more frequently than any other.

SECTION XVI.

MR. WESLEY APPROVED AND USED THE PHRASE "SECOND BLESSING."

To Mrs. Crosby, 1761: —

"The work of God goes on mightily here (London), both in conviction and conversion. This morning I have spoken with four or five who seem to have been set at liberty within this month. I believe, within five weeks, six in one class have received remission of sins, and five in one band received a *second blessing*. Peace be with you all!" — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 28.

"I had desired S. M. to give me some further account of the late work of God at Barnard Castle. Part of his answer was as follows: 'Within ten weeks, at least twenty persons in this town have found peace with God, and twenty-eight the pure love of God. This morning, before you left us, one found peace, and one the *second blessing*.'" — *Journal*, June, 1763.

To Miss Jane Hilton, 1766: —

"Do you now feel anything like anger, or pride, or self-will, or any remains of the carnal mind? Was your *second deliverance* wrought while I was at Beverly? at the time of the sermon, or after it? You did not tell me, in what manner you found the change; and whether it has continued without any intermission from that moment. Certainly

there never need be any decay: there never will, if you continue watching unto prayer." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 42.

To Miss Jane Hilton, 1774: —

"It is exceeding certain that God did give you the *second blessing*, properly so called. He delivered you from the root of bitterness, from inbred, as well as actual, sin. And at that time you were enabled to give Him all your heart; to rejoice evermore, and to pray without ceasing. Afterward, He permitted His work to be tried; and sometimes as by fire. For a while you were not moved; but could say in all things, 'Good is the will of the Lord.' But it seems you gave way, by little and little, till you were in some measure shorn of your strength" — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 45.

Tyerman says: "All agreed that the 'second blessing,' as it was then termed, was to be obtained by simple faith." — *Tyerman*, vol. ii. p. 422.

In these quotations we have the terms "second blessing," "second deliverance," and "second change," employed by Mr. Wesley, as expressive of entire sanctification, and, as he states, "properly so called."

SECTION XVII.

HOLINESS IDENTIFIED WITH THE PROMOTION OF THE GENERAL WORK OF GOD.

"THE more I converse with the believers in Cornwall, the more I am convinced that they have sustained great loss for want of hearing the doctrine of Christian perfection clearly and strongly enforced. *I see, wherever this is not done, the believers grow dead and cold.* Nor can this be prevented but by keeping up in them an hourly expectation of being perfected in love." — Vol. iv. p. 137.

"Where Christian perfection is not strongly and explicitly preached, there is seldom any remarkable blessing from God; and consequently little addition to the society, and little life in the members of it. Therefore if Jacob Rowell is grown faint, and says but little about it, do *you* supply his lack of service. *Speak and spare not.* Let not regard for any man induce you to betray the truth of God. *Till you press the believers to expect full salvation now, you must not look for any revival.*" — Vol. vi. p. 721.

"I found the plain reason why the work of God had gained no ground in this [Launceston] circuit in all the year. *The preachers had given up the Methodist testimony.* Either they did not speak of perfection at all (*the peculiar doctrine committed to our trust*), or they spoke of it only in GENERAL TERMS, *without urging the believers* to go on unto perfection, and to expect it every moment. And *wherever this is not done* the work of God does not prosper." — Vol. iv. p. 459.

"Here began that glorious work of sanctification which had been nearly at a stand for twenty years. But from time to time it spread; and wherever the work of sanctification increased, *the whole work of God increased in all its branches.*" — Vol. vii. p. 376.

"I found the work of God swiftly increasing here (London). The congregations, in every place, were larger than they had been for several years. Many were from day to day convinced of sin. Many found peace with God. Many backsliders were healed, yea, filled with joy unspeakable. And many believers entered into such a rest, as it had not before entered into their hearts to conceive." — *Journal*, August, 1761.

"Sunday, 11. — I observed God is reviving his work in Kingswood: The society, which had much decreased, being now increased again to near three hundred members; many of whom are now athirst for full redemption, which for some years they had almost forgot." — *Journal*, October, 1761.

"Monday, 30, and the two following days, I examined the society at Bristol, and was surprised to find fifty members fewer than I left in it last October. One reason is, Christian perfection has been little insisted on; and wherever this is not done, be the preachers ever so eloquent, there is little increase, either in the number or the grace of the hearers." — *Journal*, October, 1765.

To Rev. Peard Dickensen, 1767: —

"As the work of God increases in so many parts both of England and Ireland, it would be strange if there were no increase of it in London; especially while all the preachers are of one mind, and speak the same thing. Only do not forget strongly and explicitly to urge the believers to "go on to perfection." When this is constantly and earnestly done, the word is always clothed with power." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 101.

"Here (at Whitby), I found a lively society indeed: The chief reason of their liveliness was this: — Those who were renewed in love (about forty in number), continuing fervent in spirit, and zealous for God, quickened the rest, and were a blessing to all around them."—*Journal*, June, 1772.

To Rev. John Mason, 1774: —

"It is nothing strange that those who love the world should not love to continue with us. Our road is too straight.

> 'Down the stream of nature driven,
> They seek a broader path to heaven.'

However, let us keep in the good old way; and we know it will bring us peace at the last.

"If you press all the believers to go on to perfection, and to expect deliverance from sin every moment, they will grow in grace. But if ever they lose that expectation, they will grow flat and cold." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 96.

"I preached at Bradford, where the people are all alive. Many here have lately experienced the great salvation, and their zeal has been a general blessing. Indeed, this I always observe, — wherever a work of sanctification breaks out, the whole work of God prospers. Some are convinced of sin, others justified, and all stirred up to greater earnestness for salvation." — *Journal*, Aug., 1775.

"I went to Otley, where the Word of God has free course, and brings forth much fruit. This is chiefly owing to the spirit and behaviour of those whom God has perfected in love. Their zeal stirs up many; and their steady and uniform conversation has a language almost irresistible." — *Journal*, April, 1776.

"I have not lately found so lively a work in any part of England as here at Darlington. The society is constantly increasing, and seems to be all on fire for God. There is

nothing among them but humble, simple love; no dispute, no jar of any kind. They exactly answer the description that David Brainerd gives of his Indian congregation. I particularly desired both the preachers and leaders to have an especial care over them, and, if possible, to prevent either the devil or his agents from poisoning their simplicity. Many of them already know, that 'the blood of Jesus Christ' 'hath cleansed them from all sin.'" — *Journal*, May, 1777.

"When Mr. Brackenbury preached the old Methodist doctrine, one of them said, 'You must not preach such doctrine here. The doctrine of perfection is not calculated for the meridian of Edinburgh.' Waiving, then, all other hindrances, is it any wonder that the work of God has not prospered here?" — *Journal*, 1779, vol. iv. p. 510.

"I crossed over to Lynn, which has been, of a long season, a cold and comfortless place. But the scene is now entirely changed. Two young, zealous, active preachers, strongly urging the people to expect a full and present salvation, have enlivened both the society and the congregation." — *Journal*, Oct., 1785.

To Rev. John Ogilvie, 1785: —

"As long as you are yourself earnestly aspiring after a full deliverance from all sin, and a renewal in the whole image of God, God will prosper you in your labor; especially if you constantly, and strongly exhort all believers to expect full sanctification now, by simple faith. And never be weary of well-doing: in due time you shall reap if you faint not!" — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 147.

To Rev. John Baxendale, 1785: —

"You send me an agreeable account of the work of God in and near Wigan. Indeed, His work will flourish in every

place where full sanctification is clearly and strongly preached." — *Works,* vol. vii. p. 172.

To Rev. Freeborn Garretson, 1785: —

"Let none of them rest in being half Christians. Whatever they do, let them do it with all their might; and it will be well, as soon as any of them find peace with God, to exhort them to 'go on to perfection.' The more explicitly and strongly you press all believers to aspire after full sanctification, as attainable now by simple faith, the more the whole work of God will prosper." — *Works,* vol. vii. p. 172.

"We had a love-feast in the evening (at St. Margaret's), at which many artlessly testified what God had done for their souls. I have not for many years known this society in so prosperous a condition. This is undoubtedly owing, first, to the exact discipline which has for some time been observed among them, and next, to the strongly and continually exhorting the believers to 'go on unto perfection.'" — *Journal,* 1786, vol. iv. p. 632.

Rev. L. Tyerman, author of "Life and Times of Wesley," says, in a letter to E. C. Estes, Esq.: "All who are acquainted with Methodist history, are well aware that Methodism has always prospered most when the doctrine of entire sanctification has been most popular."

SECTION XVIII.

THE SELECT SOCIETIES WERE FOR THOSE ENTIRELY SANCTIFIED.

"I saw it might be useful to give some advice to all those who continued in the light of God's countenance, which the rest of their brethren did not want, and probably could not receive. So I desired a small number of such as appeared to be in this state, to spend an hour with me every Monday morning. My design was, not only to direct them how to press after perfection; to exercise their every grace, and improve every talent they had received; and to incite them to love one another more, and to watch more carefully over each other; but also to have a select company to whom I might unbosom myself on all occasions, without reserve; and whom I could propose to all their brethren as a pattern of love, of holiness, and of good works." — *Works,* vol. v. p. 184.

"At twelve I met about thirty persons (at Lewisham), who had experienced a deep work of God; and I appointed an hour for meeting them every week. Whether they are saved from sin or no, they are certainly full of faith and love, and peculiarly helpful to my soul." — *Journal,* March, 1761.

"I met the select society (at Worcester). How swiftly has God deepened His work in these! I have seen very few, either in Bristol or London, who are more clear in their experience The account all whom I had time to examine

gave, was Scriptural and rational. And, suppose they spoke true, they are witnesses of the perfection which I preach." — *Journal*, March, 1764.

To Mrs. Marston, 1770: —

"Heaviness you may sometimes feel; but you never need come into darkness. Beware of supposing darkness, that is, unbelief, to be better than the light of faith. To suppose this is one of the gross errors of popery. 'He that followeth me,' says our Lord, 'shall not walk in darkness.' That you are tempted a thousand ways will do you no hurt. In all these things you shall be more than conqueror. I hope the select society meets constantly, and that you speak freely to each other. Go on humbly and steadily, denying yourselves, and taking up your cross." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 125.

"After preaching at five, I met the select society, who seem all to have tasted the same blessing." — *Journal*, April, 1764.

"I met the select society in Whitby, consisting of sixty-five members. I believe all of these were saved from sin, and most of them walked in glorious liberty. Many of them spoke with admirable simplicity; and their word was like fire. Immediately the fire kindled, and spread from heart to heart." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 388, 1770.

"I met the select society at six (at York), and had the pleasure to find that some who had lost the great blessing for months or years, had recovered it with large increase." — *Journal*, June, 1770.

"In meeting the select society (at Witney), I was much comforted to find so few of them losing ground, and the far greater part still witnessing that 'the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.'" — *Journal*, Oct., 1775.

"I was much refreshed among this loving people (Wor-

cester); especially by the select society, the far greater part of whom could witness that God had saved them from inward as well as outward sin." — *Journal*, March, 1766.

"I was afterwards agreeably surprised, in examining the select society (at Hutton-Rudby). Many of them have been members thereof, for near twenty years. And not one of them has lost the pure love of God ever since they first received it." — *Journal*, June, 1779.

"I went on to Leeds, and, after preaching, met the select society, consisting of about sixty members; most of whom can testify, that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.'" — *Journal*, July, 1782.

"I met the select society (at St. Mary's); most of whom are clearly perfected in love." — *Journal*, March, 1786.

"I spent an agreeable hour with the select society (at Birmingham). Most of them still enjoy the pure love of God, and the rest are earnestly panting after it." — *Journal*, March, 1787.

"In the evening I met, for the second time, the bands (at Dublin). I admired them much. They are more open than those either in London or Bristol; and I think here is a greater number of those that are now clearly perfected in love, than I now find even in London itself." — *Journal* April, 1789.

To Mr. E. Lewby, 1791: —

"A man that is not a thorough friend to Christian perfection, will easily puzzle others, and thereby weaken, if not destroy, any select society." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 253.

Dr. Stevens, in his Church History, vol. ii. p. 458, says: "Mr. Wesley established meetings for penitents and backsliders, and *select societies* for persons who were

especially interested in the subject of Christian perfection."

Mr. Tyerman says: "The select societies were taken from the bands, and were composed of those who seemed to walk in the light of God's countenance." — *Tyerman*, vol. i. p. 444.

SECTION XIX.

FULL SALVATION MAY BE LOST.

"It is a common thing for those who are sanctified, to believe they cannot fall; to suppose themselves pillars in the temple of God, that shall go out no more. Nevertheless, we have seen some of the strongest of them, after a time, moved from their steadfastness. Sometimes suddenly, but oftener, by slow degrees, they have yielded to temptation; and pride, or anger, or foolish desires, have again sprung up in their hearts. Nay, sometimes they have utterly lost the life of God, and sin hath regained dominion over them.

"Several of these, after being thoroughly sensible of their fall, and deeply ashamed before God, have been again filled with love, and not only perfected therein, but stablished, strengthened, and settled. They have received the blessing they had before, with abundant increase." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 247.

"Afterwards I spent an hour with those who once believed they were saved from sin (at Barnard Castle). I found here, as at London, about a third part who held fast their confidence. The rest had suffered loss, more or less, and two or three were shorn of all their strength." — *Journal*, 1765.

"On a close examination (at Manchester), out of more than fifty persons, who, two or three years ago, were filled

with the love of God, I did not find above a third part, who had not suffered loss. But almost all were deeply sensible of their loss, and earnestly groaning for what they once enjoyed." — *Journal*, April, 1766.

"The same earnestness, I observed in the congregation at Maxfield. And yet, hardly a third part of those I formerly examined, now retain the glorious liberty which they then enjoyed." — *Journal*, April, 1766.

To Miss Jane Hilton, 1769: —

"I rejoice to hear that you stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free; and the more, because, although many taste of that heavenly gift, deliverance from inbred sin, yet so few, so exceeding few, retain it one year; hardly one in ten; nay, one in thirty. Many hundreds in London were made partakers of it, within sixteen or eighteen months; but I doubt whether twenty of them are now as holy and as happy as they were. And hence, others had doubted whether God *intended that salvation* to be enjoyed long. That many *have* it for a season, that, they allow; but are not satisfied that any *retain* it always. Shall not you, for one? You will, if you watch and pray, and continue hanging upon Him.— *Works*, vol. vii. p. 43.

To Mrs. Elizabeth Bennis, 1769: —

"Some years since, I was inclined to think that none who had once enjoyed and then lost the pure love of God, must ever look to enjoy it again till they were just stepping into eternity. But experience has taught us better things: we have at present numerous instances of those who had cast away that unspeakable blessing, and now enjoy it in a larger measure than ever." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 51.

To Miss Jane Hilton, 1770: —

"Two things are certain: the one, that it is possible to

lose even the pure love of God; the other, that it is not necessary, it is not unavoidable; it may be lost, but it may be kept. Accordingly, we have some, in every part of the kingdom, who have never been moved from their steadfastness. And from this moment you need never be moved: His grace is sufficient for you. But you must continue to grow, if you continue to stand; for no one can stand still." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 43.

"It is possible, some who spoke in this manner were mistaken. And it is certain, some have lost what they then received. A few (very few, compared to the whole number) first gave way to enthusiasm, then to pride, next to prejudice and offense, and at last separated from their brethren. But, although this laid a huge stumbling-block in the way, still the word of God went on. Nor has it ceased to this day in any of its branches. God still convinces, justifies, sanctifies. We have lost only the dross, the enthusiasm, the prejudice, and offense. The pure gold remains, faith, working by love, and, we have ground to believe, increases daily." — *Journal*, Dec., 1763.

"I returned to Limerick, but could not preach abroad, because of the severe weather. Monday, 10, after the morning preaching, I met the select society. All of these once experienced salvation from sin. Some enjoy it still; but the greater part are, more or less, shorn of their strength; yet not without hope of recovering it." — *Journal*, May, 1773.

"I went to Sheffield, and on Tuesday met the select society. But it was reduced from sixty to twenty; and but half of these retained all that they once received! What a grievous error, to think those that are saved from sin cannot lose what they have gained! It is a miracle if they do not; seeing all earth and hell are so enraged against them." — *Journal*, July, 1774.

"I returned to Chester, and found many alive to God, but scarce one that retained His pure love." — *Journal*, April, 1780.

"Here (at Limerick) were always an affectionate people; but I never found them so much so as now. It was too cold in the evening to stand abroad; so we squeezed as many as possible into the preaching-house. I preached on, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.' Many here once experienced this; but few, if any, retain it now!" — *Journal*, May, 1787.

To Adam Clarke, 1790: —

"To retain the grace of God is much more than to gain it; hardly one in three does this. And this should be strongly and explicitly urged on all who have tasted of perfect love. If we can prove that any of our local preachers or leaders, either directly or indirectly, speak against it, let him be a local preacher or leader no longer. I doubt whether he should continue in the society; because he that could speak thus in our congregation cannot be an honest man. Last week I had an excellent letter from Mrs. Pawson (a glorious witness of full salvation), showing how impossible it is to retain pure love without growing therein." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 206.

"This week I visited the classes in Bristol. I wonder we do not increase in number, although many are convinced, many justified, and a few perfected in love. I can impute the want of increase to nothing but a want of self-denial. Without this, indeed, whatever other helps they have, no believers can go forward." — *Journal*, March, 1790.

"About noon I preached at Potto, to a deeply serious congregation; and to another such in the evening at Hutton-Rudby. Twenty years this society was a pattern to all the country for seriousness and deep devotion. I think seven-

teen of them were perfected in love; but only three of them remain, and most of the rest are either removed, or grown cold and dead." — *Journal,* June, 1790.

From these statements, it is clear that in Mr. Wesley's time, as in ours, there was much vacillation, and many lost the blessing, and the work in the Church was periodical in some places and with some individuals.

SECTION XX.

ADVICE TO THOSE POSSESSING PERFECT LOVE.

"I DESIRED those who believed they were saved from sin (sixteen or seventeen in number), to meet me at noon; to whom I gave such cautions and instructions as I judged needful. Nor did any of these pretend to be above man's teaching, but received it with all thankfulness." — *Journal*, Feb., 1760.

"In the afternoon I talked with several of those who believe they are saved from sin (at Leeds); and, after a close examination, I found reason to hope that fourteen of them were not deceived. In the evening I expounded the thirteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, and exhorted all to weigh themselves in that balance, and see if they were not 'found wanting.'" — *Journal*, April, 1761.

To a member of the society, 1763: —

"The nicest point of all which relates to Christian perfection, is that which you inquire of. Thus much is certain: they that love God with all their heart, and all men as themselves, are Scripturally perfect. And surely such there are; otherwise the promise of God would be a mere mockery of human weakness. Hold fast this: but then remember, on the other hand, you have this treasure in an earthen vessel; you dwell in a poor, shattered house of clay, which presses down the immortal spirit. Hence all your thoughts, words, and actions are so imperfect; so far from

coming up to the standard (that law of love, which, but for the corruptible body, your soul would answer in all instances), that you may well say, till you go to Him you love, —

"Every moment, Lord, I need the merit of Thy death."

—*Works*, vol. vi. p. 767.

To Mrs. Crosby, 1765: —

"But whatever you find now, beware you do not deny what you had once received: I do not say, 'a Divine assurance that you should never sin, or sustain any spiritual loss.' I know not that ever you received this. But you certainly were saved from sin; and that as clearly, and in as high degree, as ever Sally Ryan was. And if you have sustained any loss in this, believe, and be made whole.

"A general temptation now is, the denying what God had wrought. Guard all whom you converse with from this; and from fancying great grace can be preserved without great watchfulness and self-denial." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 28.

"I was considering how it was, that so many who were once filled with love, are now weak and faint. And the case is plain; the invariable rule of God's proceeding is, 'From him that that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath.' Hence, it is impossible that any should retain what they receive, without improving it. Add to this, that the more we have received, the more of care and labor is required, the more watchfulness and prayer, the more circumspection and earnestness in all manner of conversation. Is it any wonder, then, that they who forget this, should soon lose what they had received? Nay, who were *taught* to forget it? Not to watch! Not to pray, — under pretence of praying always!" — *Journal*, Feb., 1765.

"From what not only you but many others likewise have

experienced, we find there is very frequently a kind of wilderness state, not only after justification, but even after deliverance from sin; and I doubt whether the sermon upon that state might not give you light in this case also. But the most frequent cause of this darkness or distress, I believe, is evil reasoning: by this, three in four of those who cast away their confidence are gradually induced so to do. And if this be the cause, is there any way to regain that deliverance but by resuming your confidence?" — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 767.

To a young disciple, 1769: —

"To set the state of perfection too high, is the surest way to drive it out of the world. The substance of that test, I believe, I have seen; and I judge it not consistent with humanity; I mean with the state of a human soul, as long as it is united to a corruptible body. Do not puzzle yourself any more with these nice inquiries; but, in order to resettle your judgment, give another deliberate reading to the 'Farther Thoughts,' or the 'Plain Account of Christian Perfection.' He that long ago gave you to taste of His pardoning love, gave you afterward a taste of His pure love." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 92.

To Mrs. Rev. John Fletcher, 1770: —

"It is not strange if the leading of one soul be very different from that of another. The same Spirit worketh in every one; and yet worketh several ways, according to His own will. It concerns us to follow our own light; seeing we are not to be judged by another's conscience." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 61.

"Always remember, the essence of Christian holiness is simplicity and purity; one design, one desire; entire devotion to God. But this admits of a thousand degrees and variations, and certainly it will be proved by a thousand

temptations; but in all these things you shall be more than conqueror." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 774.

To Mrs. Elizabeth Bennis, 1770: —

"Just now we have many persons all over England that are exactly in the state you describe. They were some time since renewed in love, and did then rejoice evermore; but after a few years, months, or weeks, they were moved from their steadfastness; yet several of these have within a few months recovered all they had lost, and some with increase; being far more established than ever they were before: and why may it not be so with you?" — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 51.

"It is true we cannot judge of ourselves by the measure of our joy; the most variable of all our sensations, and frequently depending, in a great degree, on the state of our blood and spirits. But if you take love, joy, peace, meekness, gentleness, and resignation together, I know no surer rule whereby to judge of your state to God-ward." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 773.

To Miss Mary Stokes, 1771: —

"Shall I give you a few advices? 1. Keep that safe which God has given; never let slip any blessing you have received. Regard none who tell you, 'You must lose it.' No; you may have more or less of joy. This depends upon a thousand circumstances: but you never need lose one degree of *love*. 2. You never will, if you are a careful steward of the manifold gifts of God. 'To him that hath' (that is, uses what he hath), 'it shall be given' still, and that more abundantly. Therefore, 3. Use your every grace. Stir up the gift of God that is in you. Be zealous, be active, according to your strength. Speak for God wherever you are. But, meantime, 4. Be humble! Let all that mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. Pray for the whole

spirit of humility, that you may still feel you are nothing, and may *feel* those words,

> "All might, all majesty, all praise,
> All glory be to Christ my Lord!'"

— *Works*, vol. vii. p. 140.

"As long as we dwell in a house of clay, it is liable to affect the mind; sometimes by dulling or darkening the understanding, and sometimes more directly by damping and depressing the soul, and sinking it into distress and heaviness. In this state, doubt or fear, of one kind or another, will naturally arise. And the prince of this world, who well knows whereof we are made, will not fail to improve the occasion, in order to disturb, though he cannot pollute, the heart which God hath cleansed from all unrighteousness." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 776.

To Miss Bolton, 1771: —

"At length I have snatched an hour to repeat to you in writing the advices which I gave you before. 1. Keep that safe which God has given you: never let slip any blessing which you have received. Regard none who tell you, 'You must lose it.' No; you never need lose one degree of love. 2. You never will, provided you are a careful steward of the manifold gifts of God. To him that hath, that is, useth what he hath, it shall be given still, and that more abundantly. Therefore, 3. Use your every grace. Stir up the gift of God that is in you. Be zealous! Be active! Spare no one. Speak for God, wherever you are. But, meantime, 4. Be humble: let all that mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. And be clothed with humility. Pray that you may always feel that you are nothing, less than nothing, and vanity. In this spirit speak and do everything, giving all the glory to Him that lives and rules in your heart by faith." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 114.

To Mrs. Elizabeth Bennis, 1774: —

"A will steadily and uniformly devoted to God is essential to a state of sanctification; but not a uniformity of joy, or peace, or happy communion with God. These may rise and fall in various degrees; nay, and may be affected either by the body or by diabolical agency, in a manner which all our wisdom can neither understand nor prevent. As to wanderings, you would do right well to consider the sermon on Wandering Thoughts." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 58.

SECTION XXI.

MR. WESLEY'S VIEWS OF MORAVIANISM.

"THE difference between the Moravian doctrine and ours (in this respect) lies here: —

They believe and teach, —

"1. That Christ has done all which was necessary for the salvation of all mankind.

"2. That, consequently, we are to do nothing, as necessary to salvation, but simply to believe in Him.

"3. That there is but one duty now, but one command, viz., to believe in Christ.

"4. That Christ has taken away all other commands and duties, having wholly 'abolished the law;' that a believer is therefore 'free from the law,' is not obliged thereby to do or omit anything; it being inconsistent with his liberty to do anything as commanded.

"5. That we are sanctified wholly the moment we are justified, and are neither more nor less holy to the day of our death; entire sanctification, and entire justification, being in one and the same instant.

"6. That a believer is never sanctified or holy in himself, but in Christ only; he has no holiness in himself at all, all his holiness being imputed, not inherent.

"7. That if a man regards prayer, or searching the Scriptures, or communicating, as matter of duty; if he judges himself obliged to do these things, or is troubled

when he does them not; he is in bondage; he has no faith at all, but is seeking salvation by the works of the law."

We believe that the first of these propositions is ambiguous, and all the rest utterly false.

"1. Christ has done all which was necessary for the salvation of all mankind."

This is ambiguous. Christ has not done all which wasnecessary for the absolute salvation of all mankind. For, notwithstanding all that Christ has done, he that believeth not shall be damned. But He has done all which was necessary for the conditional salvation of all mankind; that is, if they believe; for through His merits all that believe to the end, with the faith that worketh by love, shall be saved.

"3. There is but one duty now, but one command, viz., to believe in Christ."

Almost every page in the New Testament proves the falsehood of this assertion.

"4. Christ has taken away all other commands and duties, having wholly abolished the law."

How absolutely contrary is this to His own solemn declaration! — "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets. I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till heaven and earth pass."

"Therefore a believer is free from the law." That he is "free from the curse of the law," we know; and that he is "free from the law," or power "of sin and death:" but where is it written that he is free from the law of God?

"He is not obliged thereby to do or omit anything, it being inconsistent with his liberty to do anything as commanded."

So your liberty is a liberty to disobey God; whereas ours is a liberty to obey Him in all things: so grossly, while we "establish the law," do you "make void the law through faith!"

"5. We are sanctified wholly the moment we are justified, and are neither more nor less holy to the day of our death; entire sanctification and entire justification being in one and the same instant."

Just the contrary appears both from the tenor of God's Word, and the experience of His children.

"6. A believer is never sanctified or holy in himself, but in Christ only. He has no holiness in himself at all; all his holiness being imputed, not inherent."

Scripture holiness is the image of God; the mind which was in Christ; the love of God and man; lowliness, gentleness, temperance, patience, chastity. And do you coolly affirm that this is only imputed to a believer, and that he has none at all of this holiness in him? Is temperance imputed only to him that is a drunkard still; or chastity, to her that goes on in whoredom? Nay, but a believer is really chaste and temperate. And if so, he is thus far holy in himself.

Does a believer love God, or does he not? If he does, he has the love of God in him. Is he lowly, or meek, or patient at all? If he is, he has these tempers in himself; and if he has them not in himself, he is not lowly, or meek, or patient. You cannot, therefore, deny that every believer has holiness in, though not from, himself; else you deny, that he is holy at all; and if so, he cannot see the Lord.

And, indeed, if holiness in general be the mind which was in Christ, what can anyone possibly mean by, "A believer is not holy in himself, but in Christ only? that the mind which was in Christ is in a believer also; but it is in Him,—not in himself, but in Christ!" What a heap of palpable self-contradiction, what senseless jargon is this!— *Works*, vol. vii. p. 22.

To Rev. Joseph Benson, 1770:—

"You judge rightly; perfect love and Christian liberty

are the very same thing; and those two expressions are equally proper, being equally Scriptural. 'Nay, how can they and you mean the same thing? They say, you insist on holiness in the creature, on good tempers, and sin destroyed.' Most surely. And what is Christian liberty, but another word for holiness? And where is this liberty or holiness, if it is not in the creature? Holiness is the love of God and man, or the mind which was in Christ. Now, I trust, the love of God is shed abroad in your heart, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto you. And if you are holy, is not that mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus?" — *Works,* vol. vii. p. 68.

"I am myself the more sparing in the use of it ('the righteousness of Christ') because it has been so frequently and so dreadfully abused; and because the Antinomians use it at this day to justify the grossest abominations. And it is great pity that those who love, who preach, and follow after holiness, should, under the notion of honoring Christ, give any countenance to those who continually make Him 'the minister of sin,' and so build on His righteousness as to live in such ungodliness and unrighteousness as is scarce named even among the heathens." — *Works,* vol. vi. p. 102.

"But how then are we to reconcile this with that passage in the seventh chapter (of Revelations), 'They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb?' Will they say, the righteousness of Christ was washed and made white in the blood of Christ?' Away with such Antinomian jargon. Is not the plain meaning this: it was from the atoning blood, that the very righteousness of the saint derives its value and acceptableness with God? . . . Without the righteousness of Christ we could have no *claim* to glory; without holiness we could have no fitness for it. By the former we become members of Christ, children of God,

and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. By the latter, 'we are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.'" — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 457.

SECTION XXII.

THE EXTENT OF THE WORK IN MR. WESLEY'S DAY.

"HERE I stood and looked back on the late occurrences. Before Thomas Walsh left England, God began that great work which has continued ever since without any considerable intermission. During the whole time, many have been convinced of sin, many justified, and many backsliders healed. But the peculiar work of this season has been, what St. Paul calls 'the perfecting of the saints.' Many persons in London, in Bristol, in York, and in various parts, both in England and Ireland, have experienced so deep and universal a change, as it had not before entered into their hearts to conceive. After a deep conviction of inbred sin, of their total fall from God, they have been so filled with faith and love (and generally in a moment), that sin vanished, and they found from that time, no pride, anger, desire, or unbelief. They could rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks. Now, whether we call this the destruction or suspension of sin, it is a glorious work of God. Such a work as, considering both the depth and extent of it, we never saw in these kingdoms before. . . . The next evening they met again; and the Lord was again present to heal the broken in heart. One received remission of sins; and three more believed God had cleansed them from all sin. And it is observable, these are all poor, illiterate creatures, of all others most

incapable of counterfeiting, and most unlikely to attempt it." — *Journal*, March, 1760.

"Here began (at Otley) that glorious work of sanctification which had been nearly at a stand for twenty years; but which now, from time to time, spread, first through various parts of Yorkshire, afterwards in London, then through most parts of England, next through Dublin, Limerick, and all the southwest of Ireland. And wherever the work of sanctification increased, the whole work of God increased in all its branches." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 376.

"I met again with those who believe God has delivered them from the root of bitterness. Their number increases daily. I know not if fifteen or sixteen have not received the blessing this week." — *Journal*, March, 1761.

"By talking with several at Wednesbury, I found God is carrying on His work here as at London. We have ground to hope, one prisoner was set at full liberty under the sermon on Saturday morning; another under that on Saturday evening. One or more received remission of sins on Sunday; on Monday morning another, and on Wednesday yet another believed the blood of Jesus Christ had cleansed him from all sin. In the evening I could scarce think but more than one heard Him say, "I will; be thou clean!" Indeed, so wonderfully was He present till near midnight, as if He would have healed the whole congregation." — *Journal*, March, 1761.

"I rode on to Chester. Never was the society in such a state before. Their jars and contentions were at an end; and I found nothing but peace and love among them. About twelve of them believed they were saved from sin; and their lives did not contradict their profession. Most of the rest were strongly athirst for God, and looking for Him continually." — *Journal*, Aug., 1762.

"There is a glorious work going on at Limerick. Twelve or fourteen have a clear sense of being renewed; several have been justified this week; and on Sunday night, at the meeting of the society, there was such a cry as I scarce ever heard." — *Journal*, July, 1762.

"The work here (Dublin), is such as I never expected to see. Some are justified or sanctified, almost every day. This week three or four were justified, and as many, if not more, renewed in love. The people are all on fire. Such a day as last Sunday, I never saw. While I was at prayer in the society, the power of the Lord overshadowed us, and some cried out, 'Lord, I can believe!'"

"And in these two days and a half, four persons gave thanks for a sense of God's pardoning mercy; and seven (among whom were a mother and her daughter), for being perfected in love."

"Upon farther examination, I found three or four and forty, in Dublin, who seemed to enjoy the pure love of God. At least forty of these had been set at liberty, within four months. Some others, who had received the same blessing, were removed out of the city. The same, if not a larger number, had found remission of sins. Nor was the hand of the Lord shortened yet. He still wrought as swiftly as ever."

"The work of God increases every day. There is hardly a day but some are justified, or sanctified, or both. On Thursday, three came and told me that the blood of Jesus Christ had cleansed them from all sin. One of them told me she had been justified seven years, and had been five years convinced of the necessity of sanctification. But this easy conviction availed not. A fortnight since, she was seized with so keen a conviction, as gave her no rest, till God had sanctified her, and witnessed it to her heart." — *Journal*, July, 1762.

"In some respects, the work of God in this place (Dublin) was more remarkable than even that in London. 1. It is far greater, in proportion to the time, and to the number of people. That society had above seven-and-twenty hundred members; this, not a fifth part of the number. Six months after the flame broke out there, we had about thirty witnesses of the great salvation. In Dublin, there were above forty, in less than four months. 2. The work was more pure. In all this time, while they were mildly and tenderly treated, there were none of them headstrong or unadvisable; none that were wiser than their teachers; none who dreamed of being immortal or infallible, or incapable of temptation; in short, no whimsical or enthusiastic persons. All were calm and sober-minded." — *Journal*, July, 1762.

"The fire catches all that comes near. An old soldier, in his return from Germany to the north of Ireland, fell in one night with these wrestling Jacobs, to his great astonishment. As he was going to Germany, in the beginning of the war, the Lord healed him in Dublin; and, in spite of all the distresses of a severe campaign, he walked in the light continually. On his return through London, he was convinced of the necessity of full sanctification; and soon after he came hither, his heart was broken in pieces, while he was with a little company who meet daily for prayer. One evening, as they were going away, he stopped them, and begged they would not go till God had blessed him. They kneeled down again, and did not cease wrestling with God, till he had a witness that he was saved from all sin." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 379, 1762.

"I now stood and looked back on the past year; a year of uncommon trials, and uncommon blessings. Abundance have been convinced of sin; very many have found peace with God; and in London only, I believe, full two hundred have been brought into glorious liberty. And yet I have had

more care and trouble in six months, than in several years preceding. What the end will be, I know not; but it is enough that God knoweth." — *Journal*, Dec., 1762.

"I was informed of the flame which had broken out at Bolton. One writing to Mr. Furz, described a little of it in the following words: "Glory be to God, He is doing wonders among us! Since you left us there have been seven (if not more) justified, and six sanctified, at one meeting. Two of these were, I think, justified and sanctified in less than three days. O what a meeting was our last class-meeting! In three minutes, or less, God, quite unexpectedly, convinced an old opposer of the truth, and wounded many." — *Journal*, April, 1762.

"'Last night His power was present indeed; and another was assured that God, who had before forgiven his sins, had now cleansed him from all unrighteousness. There are now ten women and thirteen men who witness the same confession; and their lives agree thereto. Eight have lately received the remission of their sins; and many are on the full stretch for God, and just ready to step into the pool.' Hence it appears, that, in proportion to the time, which was only three or four weeks, and the number of hearers (not one half, if a third part), the work of God was greater in Limerick than even in Dublin itself." — *Journal*, July, 1762.

"Many years ago my brother frequently said, 'Your day of Pentecost is not fully come; but I doubt not it will: and you will then hear of persons sanctified, as frequently as you do now of persons justified.' Any unprejudiced reader may observe, that it was now fully come. And accordingly we did hear of persons sanctified, in London, and most other parts of England, and in Dublin, and many other parts of Ireland, as frequently as of persons justified:

although instances of the latter were far more frequent than they had been for twenty years before." — *Journal*, Oct., 1762.

"March 30, 1764. — I met those in Sheffield who believed God had 'redeemed them from all their sins.' They were about sixty in number. I could not learn that any among them walked unworthy of their profession. Many watched over them for evil; but they overcame evil with good. I found nothing of self-conceit, stubbornness, impatience of contradiction, or enthusiasm, among them. They had learned better of Him that was meek and lowly of heart, and 'adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour.'" — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 386.

"In the afternoons I spoke to the members of the society (at Dublin). I left four hundred and forty, and find above five hundred; more than ever they were since my first landing in the kingdom. And they are not increased in number only, but many of them are rejoicing in the pure love of God; and many more refuse to be comforted till they can witness the same confession." — *Journal*, July, 1765.

"I rode to Medros, near St. Austle, where we had the quarterly meeting for the eastern circuit. Here likewise we had an agreeable account of a still increasing work of God. This society has eighty-six members, and all rejoicing in the love of God. Fifty-five or fifty-six of these believe He has saved them from all sin; and their life no way contradicts their profession. But how many will endure to the end?" — *Journal*, Sept., 1765.

"The evening congregation in Swaledale was far larger, and equally attentive: and the society was one of the most lively which I have met with in England. Many of them do rejoice in the pure love of God, and many more are earnestly seeking it." — *Journal*, July, 1768.

"They are now only a hundred and seventy (at Cork); and yet the work of God deepens in those that remain. I found many growing in grace; many rejoicing in the pure love of God; and many more, who were earnestly panting after the whole mind that was in Christ." —*Journal*, May, 1771.

"After preaching on Wednesday evening (at Carmarthen), we had such a meeting as I have seldom known. Almost every one spoke, as well as they could for tears, and with the utmost simplicity; and many of them appeared to know 'the great salvation,' to love God with all their heart." —*Journal*, Aug., 1772.

"I found another society at High-Wycomb, almost as earnest as that at Witney. A large congregation was present at five in the morning, many of whom were athirst for full salvation. I talked with twelve of them, who seemed to have experienced it. This is genuine Christianity!" —*Journal*, Oct., 1772.

"We had a larger congregation at the renewal of the covenant than we have had for many years: and I do not know that ever we had a greater blessing. Afterwards many desired to return thanks, either for a sense of pardon, for full salvation, or for a fresh manifestation of His grace, healing all their backslidings." —*Journal*, Feb., 1775.

"At noon I preached in Tewkesbury, now the liveliest place in the circuit. Many here have been lately convinced of sin, and many converted to God. Some have been made partakers of the great salvation, and their love and zeal have stirred up others. So that the flame now spreads wider and wider. O, let none be able to quench it!" —*Journal*, March, 1775.

"The work of God prospers among us here: I never saw anything equal to it. The last time I was at St. Just, the

leaders gave me an account of seventy persons who had found either pardon or perfect love, within the last fortnight: and the night and morning I was there, twenty more were delivered." — *Journal*, April, 1782.

"I met the select society (at Manchester), consisting of between forty and fifty members. Several of these were lately made partakers of the great salvation; as several were above twenty years ago. I believe there is no place but London, where we have so many souls so deeply devoted to God; and His hand is not shortened yet, but His work rapidly increases on every side." — *Journal*, May, 1783.

"On Tuesday, and the three following days, I examined the society (at Dublin). I never found it in such a state before; many of them rejoiced in God their Saviour, and were as plain in their apparel, both men and women, as those in Bristol and London. Many, I verily believe, love God with all their hearts; and the number of these increase daily. The number of the whole society is seven hundred and forty-seven." — *Journal*, April, 1785.

"I was obliged in the evening to preach abroad. Afterward we had a love-feast (at Darlington); at which many plain people spoke the height and depth of Christian experience, in the most plain and artless manner." — *Journal*, June, 1786.

"Several also testified that the blood of Christ had cleansed them from all sin (at Burslem). Two declared, after bitter cries, that they knew their sins were just then blotted out by the blood of the Lamb; and I doubt not but it will be found, upon inquiry, that several more were either justified or sanctified." — *Journal*, March, 1787.

"The work of God has much increased here lately (at Weardale). Many have been convinced of sin, many justified; some perfected in love, and many added to the society." — *Journal*, June, 1788.

"All the remains of the Palatine families came hither from Balligarane, Court-Mattris, and Ratheal; in all which places an uncommon flame has lately broke out, such as was never seen before. Many in every place have been deeply convinced, many converted to God, and some perfected in love. Some societies are doubled in number, some increased six or even ten fold." — *Journal*, May, 1789.

SECTION XXIII.

THE OPPOSITION MR. WESLEY ENCOUNTERED ON THE SUBJECT OF HOLINESS.

"Now permit me to ask, why are you so angry with those who profess to have attained this? And so mad (I cannot give it any softer title) against Christian perfection? — Against the most glorious gift which God ever gave to the children of men upon earth? View it in every one of the preceding points of light, and see what it contains that is either odious or terrible: that is calculated to excite either hatred or fear in any reasonable creature.

"What rational objection can you have, to the loving the Lord your God with all your heart? Why should you be afraid of it? Would it do you any hurt? Would it lessen your happiness, either in this world, or the world to come? And why should you be unwilling that others should give Him their whole heart? Or that they should love their neighbors as themselves? — Yea, "As Christ hath loved us?" Is this detestable? Is it the proper object of hatred? Or is it the most amiable thing under the sun? Is it proper to move terror? Is it not rather desirable in the highest degree?

"Why are you so averse to having in you the whole 'mind which was in Christ Jesus?' All the affections, all the tempers and dispositions, which were in Him, while He dwelt among men? Why should you be afraid of this? Would it be any worse for you, were God to work in you

this very hour, all the mind that was in Him?" — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 174.

"Why have the preachers of it been hooted at like mad dogs, even by men that fear God, nay, and by some of their own children, some whom they, under God, have begotten through the Gospel?" — *Plain Account*, p. 170.

To Sarah Crosby, 1766: —

"A general faintness, in this respect (on the subject of Christian perfection), is fallen upon the whole kingdom. Sometimes, I seem almost weary of striving against the stream both of preachers and people."

"Those who love God with all their heart must expect much *opposition from professors* who have gone on for *twenty years* in an *old* BEATEN TRACK, and fancy they are *wiser* than all the world. THESE ALWAYS OPPOSE THE WORK OF SANCTIFICATION MOST." — *H. A. Rogers' Journal*, p. 177.

"'No,' says a great man, 'this is the error of errors; I hate it from my heart. I pursue it through all the world with fire and sword.' Nay, why so vehement? Do you seriously think there is no error under heaven equal to this? Here is something which I cannot understand. Why are those that oppose salvation from sin (few excepted) so eager? I had almost said, furious? Are you fighting *pro aris et focis?* For God and your country? For all you have in the world? For all that is near and dear unto you? For your liberty? For your life? In God's name, why are you so fond of sin? What good has it ever done you? What good is it ever likely to do you, either in this world, or in the world to come? And why are you so violent against those that hope for a deliverance from it? Have patience with us, if we are in an error; yea, suffer us to enjoy our error. If we should not attain it, the very expectation of this deliverance gives us present comfort; yea, and min-

isters strength, to resist those enemies which we expect to conquer. If you could persuade us to despair of that victory, we should give over the contest. Now 'we are saved by hope;' from this very hope a degree of salvation springs. Be not angry at those who are *felices errore suo;* happy in their mistake. Else, be their opinion right or wrong, your temper is undeniably sinful: bear then with *us*, as we do with *you;* and see whether the Lord will not deliver us! Whether He is not able, yea, and willing, 'to save them to the uttermost that come unto God through Him.'" — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 176.

"But is there no way to prevent these crosses which usually fall on those who *speak of being thus saved?*" — "It seems they cannot be prevented altogether while so much of nature remains even in believers. But something might be done if the preacher in every place would: (1) Talk freely with all who speak thus; and, (2) *Labor to prevent the unjust or unkind treatment of those in favor of whom* there *is reasonable proof.*" — *Plain Account*, p. 71.

"Suffer me to ask one question more. Why should any man of reason and religion be either afraid of, or averse to, salvation from all sin? Is not sin the greatest evil on this side hell? And if so, does it not naturally follow, that an entire deliverance from it is one of the greatest blessings on this side heaven? How earnestly then should it be prayed for by all the children of God! By sin I mean, *a voluntary transgression of a known law.* Are you averse to being delivered from this? Are you afraid of such a deliverance? Do you then love sin, that you are so unwilling to part with it? Surely no. You do not love either the devil or his works. You rather wish to be totally delivered from them: to have sin rooted out both of your life and your heart.

"I have frequently observed, and not without surprise, that the opposers of perfection are more vehement against it when it is placed in this view, than in any other whatsoever: they will allow all you say of the love of God and man; of the mind which was in Christ; of the fruit of the Spirit; of the image of God; of universal holiness; of entire self-dedication; of sanctification in spirit, soul, and body; yea, and of the offering up of all our thoughts, words, and actions, as a sacrifice to God; — all this they will allow, so we will allow sin, a little sin, to remain in us till death." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 176.

"Monday, 14. — I was explaining the 'liberty' we have 'to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,' when one cried out, as in an agony, 'Thou art a hypocrite, a devil, an enemy to the Church." — *Journal*, 1740.

In 1763, at the time of the fanaticism of Maxfield and Bell, Charles Wesley became quite prejudiced against instantaneous sanctification, and for a time seemed to oppose his brother. In 1768, Mr. Wesley wrote as follows: "What shall we do? I think it is high time that you and I, at least, should come to a point. Shall we go on in asserting perfection against all the world, or shall we quietly let it drop? We really must do one or the other; and, I apprehend, the sooner the better. What shall we jointly and explicitly maintain and recommend to all our preachers, concerning the nature, the time (now or by and by), and the manner of it, — instantaneously or not? I am weary of intestine war, or preachers quoting one of us against the other. At length, let us fix something for good and all, either the same as formerly, or different from it." — *Works*, English edition, vol. xii. p. 126.

"We begin now to meet with opposition from every quarter. Some say this is rank enthusiasm; others, that it is either a cheat, or mere pride; others, that it is a new thing, and that they can find no such thing in the Bible."

June 3.— "The Lord increases His work, in proportion to the opposition it meets with." — *Journal*, May, 1762.

"The greatest part of this spring (of 1763), I was fully employed in visiting the society, and settling the minds of those who had been confused and distressed by a thousand misrepresentations. Indeed, a flood of calumny and evil speaking (as was easily foreseen) had been poured out on every side. My point was still, to go straight forward in the work whereto I am called." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 393.

To Rev. Mr. Venn, 1765: —

"To this poor end the doctrine of perfection has been brought in, head and shoulders. And when such concessions were made as would abundantly satisfy any fair and candid man, they were no nearer, — rather farther off; for they had no desire to be satisfied. To make this dear breach wider and wider, stories were carefully gleaned up, improved, yea, invented and retailed, both concerning me and 'the perfect ones.' And when anything very bad has come to hand, some have rejoiced as though they had found great spoils." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 303.

To his brother, 1768: —

"I am at my wit's end with regard to two things, — the church, and Christian perfection. Unless both you and I stand in the gap *in good earnest*, the Methodists will drop them both. Talking will not avail. We must *do* or be borne away. Will you set shoulder to shoulder? If so, think deeply upon the matter, and tell me what can be done. *Age, vir esto! nervos intendas tuos.* [Come on, act the man

do your utmost.] Peace be with you and yours! Adieu." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 670.

"And hence you was, of course, disgusted at those who did not yield to this temper, and blamed that conformity. Perhaps some of these professed or expected to be perfected in love; they at least believed perfection. Now this you seemed to hate with a perfect hatred; and on that account disliked them the more." — *Journal*, June, 1769.

"*Thursday*, 14. About two at Potto; and in the evening at Hutton. Here, as well as elsewhere, those who believe they are saved from sin undergo many trials from their brethren. But so much the more will 'the God of all grace, after' they 'have suffered a while, stablish, strengthen, and settle' them." — *Journal*, June, 1770.

To Mrs. Elizabeth Bennis, 1771: —

"I did believe brother C—— would be of use to you, and you may be of use to him. Speak to each other without reserve, and then you will seldom meet in vain. Thrust him out to visit the whole society (not only those that can give him meat and drink), from house to house, according to the plan laid down in the Minutes of Conference; then he will soon see the fruit of his labor. I hope he is not ashamed to preach full salvation, receivable now by faith. This is the word which God will always bless, and which the devil peculiarly hates; therefore he is constantly stirring up both his own children and the weak children of God against it." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 55.

To Mrs. Mary Marston, 1771:

"Does Mr. Clough, or any other of the preachers, speak against perfection, or give occasion to them that trouble you? You would do well to speak to anyone that does, that you may come to a better understanding. So far as in you

lies, let not the good that is in you be evil spoken of. But beware, lest the unkind usage of your brethren betray you into any kind of guile or false prudence. Still let all your conversation be in simplicity and godly sincerity. Be plain, open, downright, without disguise." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 127.

To Dr. Adam Clark, 1790: —

"The account you send me of the continuance of the great work of God in Jersey, gives me great satisfaction. To retain the grace of God is much more than to gain it; hardly one in three does this. And this should be strongly and explicitly urged on all who have tasted of perfect love. If we can prove that any of our local preachers or leaders, either directly or indirectly, speak against it, let him be a local preacher or leader no longer. I doubt whether he should continue in the society. Because he that could speak thus in our congregations cannot be an honest man." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 205.

Tyerman says: "As we have often shown, Wesley regarded the preaching of the doctrine of Christian perfection as of the utmost importance." After quoting this letter to Dr. Adam Clark, he says: "*Such letters might be greatly multiplied.*"—*Tyerman*, vol. iii. p. 633.

To Mr. Edward Lewley, in 1791, a month before he died: —

"I do not believe any single person in your select society scruples saying: —

'Every moment, Lord, I need
The merit of Thy death.'

This is clearly determined in the 'Thoughts upon Christian Perfection.' But who expects common people to speak accurately? And how easy is it to entangle them in their talk! I am afraid some have done this already. A man

that is not a thorough friend to Christian perfection will easily puzzle others, and thereby weaken, if not destroy, any select society. I doubt this has been the case with you. That society was in a lively state, and well united together, when I was last at Birmingham." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 253.

SECTION XXIV.

ON HEARING MINISTERS WHO OPPOSE THE TRUTH.

"1. LAST summer I received a letter from Yorkshire, signed by several serious men, who proposed a difficulty they were under, wherein they knew not how to act. And, indeed, I did not well know how to advise them. So I delayed giving them a determinate answer, till I could lay the matter before our brethren at the ensuing conference.

"2. Their difficulty was this: 'You advise all the members of our societies constantly to attend the service of the Church. We have done so for a considerable time. But very frequently Mr. R., our minister, preaches not only what we believe to be false, but dangerously false, doctrine. He asserts, and endeavours to prove, that we cannot be saved from our sins in this life; and that we must not hope to be perfected in love on this side eternity. Our nature is very willing to receive this; therefore, it is very liable to hurt us. Hence we have a doubt, whether it is our duty to hear this preaching, which experience shows to weaken our souls.'

"3. This letter I laid before the conference, and we easily perceived the difficulty therein proposed concerned not only the society at Baildon, but many others in various parts of the kingdom. It was therefore considered at large, and all our brethren were desired to speak their sentiments freely. In the conclusion, they unanimously agreed, First, that it was highly expedient, all the Methodists (so called) who had been bred therein should attend the service of the Church as

often as possible; but that, Secondly, if the minister began either to preach the absolute decrees, or to rail at and ridicule Christian perfection, they should quietly and silently go out of the church; yet attend it again the next opportunity.

"4. I have since that time revolved this matter over and over in my mind; and the more I consider it, the more I am convinced, this was the best answer that could be given. I still advise all our friends, when this case occurs, quietly and silently to go out. Only I must earnestly caution them not to be critical; not to make a man an offender for a word; no, nor for a few sentences, which any who believe the decrees may drop without design. But if such a minister should at any time deliberately, and of set purpose, endeavour to establish absolute predestination, or to confute Scriptural perfection, then I advise all the Methodists in the congregation quietly to go away."

LEWISHAM, JAN. 9, 1782.

SECTION XXV.

MR. WESLEY'S OBJECTION TO AND TREATMENT OF FANATICISM.

THE reader will bear in mind that the word *enthusiasm*, used in the following quotations, had the same meaning in Mr. Wesley's day, that *fanaticism* does now.

"The very desire of '*growing in grace*,' may sometimes be an inlet of *enthusiasm*. As it continually leads us to seek new grace, it may lead us unawares to seek *something else new*, besides *new degrees* of *love* to God and man. So it has led some to seek and fancy they had received gifts of a *new kind*, after a new heart.

"Another ground of these and a thousand mistakes is, the not considering deeply that *love is the highest gift of God — humble, gentle, patient love;* that all *visions, revelations, manifestations* whatever, are *little things* compared to *love;* and that all the gifts above mentioned are either the same with, or infinitely inferior to it.

"It is well you should be thoroughly sensible of this — the heaven of heavens is love. *There is nothing higher in religion*, — there is, in effect, nothing else. If you look for anything but more love, you are looking wide of the mark — *you are getting out of the royal way.*

"And when you are asking others, 'Have you received this or that blessing?' if you mean any thing but *more love, you mean wrong;* you are leading them *out of the way*, and

putting them upon a *false scent.* Settle it, then, in your heart, that from the moment God has saved you from all sin, you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth of the Corinthians. You can go no higher than this, till you are carried into Abraham's bosom.

"I say again, Beware of *enthusiasm;* such as the imagining you have the gift of prophesying, or of discerning of spirits, which I do not believe one of you has; no, nor ever had yet." — *Plain Account,* pp. 140, 141.

"I returned to Oxford, and on Wednesday rode to Bristol. My brother, I found, was already gone to Wales; so that I came just in season; and that, indeed, on another account also; for a spirit of enthusiasm was breaking in upon many, who charged their own imaginations on the will of God, and that not written, but impressed on their hearts. If these impressions be received as the rule of action, instead of the written word, I know nothing so wicked or absurd but we may fall into, and that without remedy." — *Journal,* July, 1741.

"I had a long conversation with Mr. Simpson. And of this I am fully persuaded, that whatever he does, is in the uprightness of his heart. But he is led into a thousand mistakes by one wrong principle (the same which many either ignorantly or wickedly ascribe to the body of the people called Methodists), the making inward impressions his rule of action, and not the written word." — *Journal,* June, 1742.

"I began examining the society (Bristol), and not before it was wanted: for the plague was begun. I found many crying out, "Faith, faith! Believe, believe!" but making little account of the fruits of faith, either of holiness or good works. In a few days they came to themselves, and had a more thorough understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus." — *Journal,* February, 1744.

"About one, I preached at Seacroft, and found several who believed God had saved them from sin. In the evening I talked with twelve or fourteen of these particularly; but I found not one who presumed to say that he did not need the atoning blood. Nor could I hear of any more than two persons that ever spoke in this manner; and these were soon after, for that reason, expelled out of Otley society." — *Journal*, July, 1761.

"I heard George Bell once more, and was convinced he must not continue to pray at the Foundery. The reproach of Christ I am willing to bear; but not the reproach of enthusiasm, if I can help it." — *Journal*, Dec., 1762.

"But I dislike several things therein: 1. The singing, or speaking, or praying, of several at once: 2. The praying to the Son of God only, or more than to the Father: 3. The using improper expressions in prayer; sometimes too bold, if not irreverent; sometimes too pompous and magnificent, extolling yourselves rather than God, and telling Him what you are, not what you want: 4. Using poor, flat, bald hymns: 5. The never kneeling at prayer: 6. Your using postures or gestures highly indecent: 7. Your screaming, even so as to make the words unintelligible: 8. Your affirming, people will be justified or sanctified just now: 9. The affirming they are, when they are not: 10. The bidding them say, 'I believe:' 11. The bitterly condemning any that oppose, calling them wolves, &c.; and pronouncing them hypocrites, or not justified."

"I dislike something that has the appearance of enthusiasm, overvaluing feelings and inward impressions, mistaking the mere work of imagination for the voice of the Spirit, expecting the end without the means; and undervaluing reason, knowledge, and wisdom in general."

"I dislike your directly or indirectly depreciating justifi-

cation; saying, a justified person is not in Christ, is not born of God, is not a new creature, has not a new heart, is not sanctified, not a temple of the Holy Ghost; or that he cannot please God, or cannot grow in grace.

"I dislike your saying that one saved from sin needs nothing more than looking to Jesus; needs not to hear or think of anything else; believe, believe, is enough; that he needs no self-examination, no times of private prayer."

"But I dislike your supposing man may be as perfect as an angel; that he can be absolutely perfect; that he can be infallible, or above being tempted; or that the moment he is pure in heart, he cannot fall from it." — *To Bell and Owen Journal*, Oct., 1762.

"All this time I observed a few of our brethren were diligently propagating that principle, that none can teach those who are renewed in love, unless he be in the state himself. I saw the tendency of this; but I saw that violent remedies would not avail." — *Journal*, 1762.

"Being determined to hear for myself, I stood where I could hear and see without being seen. George Bell prayed, in the whole, pretty near an hour. His fervor of spirit I could not but admire. I afterwards told him what I did not admire; namely; 1. His screaming every now and then, in such a strange manner, that one could scarcely tell what he said; 2. His thinking he had the miraculous discernment of spirits." — *Journal*, Nov., 1762.

"There is another notion, your lordship (the bishop of London), says, which we find propagated through the writings of those people, and that is, the making inward, secret, and sudden impulses the guide of their actions, resolutions, and designs. Mr. Church urged the same objection before. 'Instead of making the Word of God the rule of his actions, he follows only his secret impulse.' I beg leave to

return the same answer. In the whole compass of language there is not a proposition which less belongs to me than this. I have declared again and again, that I make the Word of God, the rule of all my actions; and that I no more follow any 'secret impulse' instead thereof, than I follow Mohammed, or Confucius." — *Works*, vol. v. p. 341.

To his brother, 1762: —

"Many of our brethren are overshooting sober Christianity in London. Oh, that I could stand in the gap! Oh, that I could, by sacrificing myself, shut this immense abyss of enthusiasm, which opens its mouth among us! The corruption of the best things is always the worst of corruptions." — *Arminian Magazine*, 1795, p. 151.

"I met at noon, as usual, those who believe they are saved from sin, and warned them of the enthusiasm which was breaking in, by means of two or three weak, though good men, who, from a misconstrued text in the Revelation, inferred that they should not die. They received the warning in much love." — *Journal*, 1762.

"In the evening I preached at Yarm; but I found the good doctrine of Christian perfection had not been heard of there for some time. The wildness of our poor brethren in London has put it out of countenance above two hundred miles off; so these strange advocates for perfection have given it a deeper wound than all its enemies together could do!" — *Journal*, 1763.

"All this week I endeavored to confirm those who had been shaken as to the important doctrine of Christian perfection, either by its wild defenders, or wise opposers, who much availed themselves of that wildness. It must needs be that such offenses will come; but 'woe unto him by whom the offense cometh'!" — *Journal*, Oct., 1763.

"I rode on to Newcastle, where I was quite unexpected. I found both the hearers, the society, and the believers, are increased since I was here last; and several more believe they are saved from sin. Meantime Satan has not been idle. Two were following George Bell, step by step, as to the 'not needing self-examination,' the 'not being taught by man,' and most of his other unscriptural extravagancies; but as they appeared to be still of an advisable spirit, for the present, at least, the snare was broken." — *Journal*, April, 1765.

To Miss Bolton, 1772: —

"What I have seen in London occasioned the first caution I gave you. George Bell, William Green, and many others, then full of love, were favored with extraordinary revelations and manifestations from God. But by this very thing, Satan beguiled them from the simplicity that is in Christ. By insensible degrees they were led to value these extraordinary gifts more than the ordinary grace of God; and I could not convince them that a grain of humble love was better than all these gifts put together. This, my dear friend, was what made me fear for you. This makes me remind you again and again." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 115.

To Miss Ritchie, 1776: —

"Oh, desire nothing different in nature from love! There is nothing higher in earth or heaven. Whatever he speaks of, which seems to be higher, is either natural or preternatural enthusiasm. Desire none of those extraordinaries. Such a desire might be an inlet to a thousand delusions. I wish your desires may all centre in that, —

'I want the witness, Lord,
That all I do is right!
According to Thy will and word,
Well pleasing in Thy sight.

I ask no higher state,
Indulge me but in this!
And soon, or later, then translate
To my eternal bliss!'

Works, vol. vii. p. 178.

To Miss Loxdale, 1781: —

"I avoid, I am afraid of, whatever is peculiar, either in the experience or the language of anyone. I desire nothing, I will accept of nothing, but the common faith and common salvation; and I want you, my dear sister, to be only just such a common Christian as Jenny Cooper was. The new expressions of Madame Bourignon naturally tended to give you a new set of ideas. They would surely set your imagination at work, and make you fancy wonderful things; but they were only shadows." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 219.

To Miss H. A. Roe, 1781: —

"Many of our brethren and sisters in London, during that great outpouring of the Spirit, spoke of several new blessings which they had attained. But after all, they could find nothing higher than pure love; on which the full assurance of hope generally attends. This the inspired writings always represent as the highest point; only there are innumerable degrees of it. The plerophory, or full assurance of faith, is such a clear conviction of being now in the favor of God, as excludes all doubt and fear concerning it." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 193.

To Miss Bolton, 1784: —

"As you will be the better enabled, by your own experience, to guard all, especially young persons, from laying stress upon anything but the *written Word of God*. Guard them against reasoning in that dangerous manner, 'If I was deceived in this, then I was deceived in thinking myself justified.' Not at all: although nature or Satan in the

latter case, admirably well mimicked the works of God." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 118.

To Miss Bolton, 1785: —

"I have often found an aptness both in myself and others, to connect events that have no real relation to each other. So one says, 'I am as sure this is the will of God, as that I am justified.' Another says, 'God as surely spake this to my heart as ever He spoke to me at all.' This is an exceedingly dangerous way of thinking or speaking. We know not what it may lead us to. It may sap the very foundation of our religion. It may insensibly draw us into Deism or Atheism. My dear Nancy, my sister, my friend, beware of this!" — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 119.

"It is chiefly among these enormous mountains that so many have been awakened, justified, and soon after perfected in love; but even while they are full of love, Satan strives to push many of them to extravagance. This appears in several instances: — 1. Frequently three or four, yea, ten or twelve, pray aloud all together. 2. Some of them, perhaps many, scream altogether as loud as they possibly can. 3. Some of them use improper, yea, indecent, expressions in prayer. 4. Several drop down as dead; and are as stiff as a corpse; but in a while they start up, and cry, 'Glory! glory!' perhaps twenty times together. Just so do the French prophets, and very lately the Jumpers in Wales, bring the real work into contempt. Yet whenever we reprove them, it should be in the most mild and gentle manner possible." — *Journal*, April, 1786.

To Rev. Freeborn Garrettson, 1789: —

"A great man observes that there is a threefold leading of the Spirit. Some He leads by giving them, on every occasion, apposite texts of Scripture; some by suggesting

reasons for every step they take, — the way by which He chiefly leads me; and some by impressions; but he judges the last to be the least desirable way; as it is often impossible to distinguish dark impressions from Divine, or even diabolical. — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 187.

To Rev. Freeborn Garrettson, 1789: —

"But there is one expression that occurs twice or thrice in yours, which gives me some concern; you speak of finding *freedom* to do this or that. This is a word much liable to be abused. If I have plain Scripture, or plain reason, for doing a thing, well. These are my rules, and my only rules. I regard not whether I had freedom or no. This is an unscriptural expression, and a very fallacious rule. I wish to be, in every point, great and small, a Scriptural, rational Christian." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 186.

"A few (very few compared to the whole number) first gave way to enthusiasm, then to pride; next to prejudice and offense; and at last separated from their brethren. But although this laid a huge stumbling-block in the way, yet the work of God went on. Nor has it ceased to this day in any of its branches. God still convinces, justifies, sanctifies. We lost only the dross, the enthusiasm, the prejudice, and offense. The pure gold remained, 'faith working by love;' yea, and increased daily. — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 384.

"I have still abundance of letters in my hands, equal to any that have yet been published. Indeed, there is a peculiar energy of thought and language in many of these which were written in the year 1759, and a few of the following years, suitable to that unusual outpouring of the Spirit, with which both London and many parts of England and Ireland were favored during that happy period. Happy, I cannot but call it, notwithstanding the tares which Satan

found means of sowing among the wheat. And I cannot but adopt the prayer of a pious man in Scotland, upon a similar occasion, 'Lord, if it please Thee, work the same work again, *without the blemishes;* but if that cannot be, though it be with all the blemishes, work the same work.'" — *Arminian Magazine,* 1780.

How Mr. Wesley treated fanaticism is seen in a letter to his brother Charles, written in 1762: —

"This week I have begun to speak my mind concerning five or six honest enthusiasts. But I move only a hair's breadth at a time. No sharpness will profit. There is need of a lady's hand, as well as a lion's heart."

As late as 1768, Mr. Wesley writes: "If a hundred enthusiasts were set aside, we are still encompassed with a cloud of witnesses who have testified, and do testify, in life and in death, the perfection we have taught for forty years." — *Journal,* Aug., 1768.

SECTION XXVI.

MINUTES OF CONFERENCE CONVERSATIONS.

On Tuesday morn. June 26, 1759. was considered the doctrine of sanctification. A part of these conversations are given in detached portions in "The Plain Account." I give them as found in his works.

What is it to be sanctified?

To be renewed in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness.

Is faith the condition, or the instrument, of sanctification?

It is both the condition and instrument of it. When we begin to believe, then sanctification begins. And as faith increases, holiness increases, till we are created anew.

What is implied in being a perfect Christian?

The loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our mind, and soul, and strength; Deut. vi. 5; xxx. 6; Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 29.

Does this imply that all inward sin is taken away?

Without doubt; or how could we be said to be saved "from all our uncleannesses?" verse 29.

Can we know one who is thus saved? What is a reasonable proof of it?

We cannot, without the miraculous discernment of spirits, be infallibly certain of those who are thus saved. But we apprehend, these would be the best proofs which the nature of the thing admits: (1.) If we had sufficient evidence of

their unblamable behavior preceding. (2.) If they gave a distinct account of the time and manner wherein they were saved from sin, and of the circumstances thereof, with such sound speech as could not be reproved. And, (3.) If, upon a strict inquiry afterward, from time to time, it appeared that all their tempers, and words, and actions, were holy and unreprovable.

How should we treat those who think they have attained this?

Exhort them to forget the things that are behind, and to watch and pray always, that God may search the ground of their hearts.— *Works*, vol. v. p. 197.

At first we preached almost wholly to unbelievers. To those, therefore, we spake almost continually of remission of sins through the death of Christ, and the nature of faith in His blood. And so we do still, among those who need to be taught the first elements of the Gospel of Christ.

But those in whom the foundation is already laid, we exhort to go on to perfection; which we did not see so clearly at first; although we occasionally spoke of it from the beginning.— *Works*, vol. v. p. 200.

Do we ordinarily represent a justified state so great and happy as it is?

Perhaps not. A believer, walking in the light, is inexpressibly great and happy.

Should we not have a care of depreciating justification, in order to exalt the state of full sanctification?

Undoubtedly we should beware of this; for one may insensibly slide into it.

How shall we effectually avoid it?

When we are going to speak of entire sanctification, let us first describe the blessings of a justified state, as strongly as possible.— *Works*, vol. v. p. 201.

How much is allowed by our brethren who differ with us in regard to entire sanctification?

They grant (1.) That every one must be entirely sanctified in the article of death.

(2.) That, till then, a believer daily grows in grace, comes nearer and nearer to perfection.

(3.) That we ought to be continually pressing after this, and to exhort all others so to do.

What do we allow them?

We grant, (1.) That many of those who have died in the faith, yea, the greater part of those we have known, were not sanctified throughout, not made perfect in love, till a little before death.

(2.) That the term, "sanctified," is continually applied by St. Paul to all that were justified, were true believers.

(3.) That by this term alone, he rarely, if ever, means saved from all sin.

(4.) That, consequently, it is not proper to use it in this sense, without adding the word "wholly, entirely," or the like.

(5.) That the inspired writers almost continually speak of or to those who are justified; but very rarely, either of or to those who are wholly sanctified.

(6.) That, consequently, it behooves us to speak in public almost continually of the state of justification; but more rarely, in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification.

What, then, is the point wherein we divide?

It is this: whether we should expect to be saved from all sin before the article of death.

Is there any clear Scripture promise of this; that God will save us from all sin?

There is: "He shall redeem Israel from *all* his sins," Psalm cxxx. 8. This is more largely expressed in the proph-

ecy of Ezekiel: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from *all* your idols, will I cleanse you. I will also save you from *all* your uncleannesses," xxxvi. 25, 29. No promise can be more clear. And to this the Apostle plainly refers in that exhortation: "Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1. Equally clear and express is that ancient promise: "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul," Deut. xxx. 6.

But does any assertion answerable to this occur in the New Testament?

There does, and that laid down in the plainest terms. So St. John: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," iii. 8, without any limitation or restriction: but all sin is the work of the devil Parallel to which is that assertion of St. Paul: "Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish," Ephes. v. 25, 27. And to the same effect is his assertion in the eight of the Romans: "God sent his Son — that the righteousness of the law, might be fulfilled in us, walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," verses 3, 4.

Does the New Testament afford any farther ground for expecting to be saved from all sin?

Undoubtedly it does, both in those prayers and commands which are equivalent to the strongest assertions.

What prayers do you mean?

Prayers for entire sanctification; which, were there no such thing, would be mere mockery of God. Such, in particular, are, (1.) "Deliver us from evil;" or rather, "from

the evil one." Now, when this is done, when we are delivered from all evil, there can be no sin remaining. (2.) "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us. I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one," John xvii. 20, 21, 23. (3.) "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ — that He would grant you — that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God," Eph. iii. 14, 16–19. (4.) "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Thess. v. 23.

What command is there to the same effect?

(1.) "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven, is perfect," Matt. v. 48. (2.) "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," Matt. xxii. 37. But if the love of God fill all the heart, there can be no sin there.

But how does it appear that this is to be done before the article of death?

First. From the very nature of a command, which is not given to the dead, but to the living. Therefore, "Thou shalt love God with all thy heart," cannot mean, Thou shalt do this when thou diest, but while thou livest.

Secondly. From express texts of Scripture: (1.) "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, having renounced (*arnasamenoi*) ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for — the

glorious appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," Titus ii. 11–14. (2.) "He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us,— to perform the mercy promised to our fathers; the oath which He sware to our father Abraham, that He would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, should serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life," Luke i. 69–75.

Is there any example in Scripture, of persons who had attained to this?

Yes. St. John, and all those of whom he says in his First Epistle, "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because, as He is, so are we in this world," iv. 17.

But why are there not more examples of this kind recorded in the New Testament?

It does not become us to be peremptory in this matter. One reason might possibly be, because the Apostles wrote to the Church while it was in a state of infancy. Therefore they might mention such persons more sparingly, lest they should give strong meat to babes.

Can you show one such example now? Where is he that is thus perfect?

To some who make this inquiry, one might answer, "If I knew, I would not tell you. For you do not inquire out of love. You are like Herod. You only seek the young child to slay it."

But more directly, we answer,There are numberless reasons why there should be few (if any indisputable), examples. What inconveniences would this bring on the person himself, set as a mark for all to shoot at. What a temptation would it be to others, not only to men who know not God, but to believ-

ers themselves! How hardly would they refrain from idolizing such a person! And yet, how unprofitable to gainsayers! "For if they hear not Moses and the Prophets," Christ and His Apostles, "neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

Suppose one had attained to this, would you advise him to speak of it?

Not to them who know not God. It would only provoke them to contradict and blaspheme; nor to any without some particular reason, without some particular good in view. And then they should have an especial care to avoid all appearance of boasting.

Is it a sin, not to believe those who say they have attained?

By no means, even though they said true. We ought not hastily to believe, but to suspend our judgment, till we have full and strong proof.

But are we not apt to have a secret distaste to any who say they are saved from all sin?

It is very possible we may, and that on several grounds; partly from a concern for the honor of God, and the good of souls, who may be hurt, yea, or turned out of the way, if these are not what they profess; partly from a kind of implicit envy at those who speak of higher attainments than our own; and partly from our slowness and unreadiness of heart to believe the works of God.

Does not the harshly preaching perfection tend to bring believers into a kind of bondage, or slavish fear?

It does; therefore we should always place it in the most amiable light, so that it may excite only hope, joy, and desire.

Why may we not continue in the joy of faith even till we are made perfect?

Why indeed! since holy grief does not quench this joy; since even while we are under the cross, while we deeply

partake of the sufferings of Christ, we may rejoice with joy unspeakable.

Do we not discourage believers from rejoicing evermore?

We ought not so to do. Let them all their life long rejoice unto God, so it be with reverence. And even if lightness, or pride should mix with their joy, let us not strike at the joy itself (this is the gift of God), but at that lightness, or pride, that the evil may cease, and the good remain.

Ought we to be anxiously careful about perfection, lest we should die before we have attained?

In no wise. We ought to be thus careful for nothing, neither spiritual nor temporal.

But ought we not to be troubled on account of the sinful nature which still remains in us?

It is good for us to have a deep sense of this, and to be much ashamed before the Lord: but this should only incite us the more earnestly to turn unto Christ every moment, and to draw light, and life, and strength from Him, that we may go on conquering and to conquer. And, therefore, when the sense of our sin most abounds, the sense of His love should much more abound.

Will our joy or our trouble increase as we grow in grace?

Perhaps both. But without doubt our joy in the Lord will increase as our love increases.

Is not the teaching believers to be continually poring upon their inbred sin, the ready way to make them forget that they were purged from their former sins?

We find by experience it is; or to make them undervalue and account it a little thing; whereas, indeed (though there are still greater gifts behind), this is inexpressibly great and glorious. — *Works*, vol. v. p. 207–209.

Strongly and explicitly exhort all believers to "go on to perfection." That we may "all speak the same thing," I ask, once for all, shall we defend this perfection, or give it

up? You all agree to defend it, meaning thereby (as we did from the beginning), salvation from all sin, by the love of God and man filling our heart. The Papists say, "This cannot be attained, till we have been refined by the fire of purgatory." The Calvinists say, "Nay, it will be attained as soon as the soul and body part." The old Methodists say, "It may be attained before we die: a moment after is too late." Is it so or not? You are all agreed, we may be saved from all sin before death. The substance then is settled; but, as to the circumstance, is the change gradual or instantaneous? It is both the one and the other. From the moment we are justified, there may be a gradual sanctification, a growing in grace, a daily advance in the knowledge and love of God. And if sin cease before death, there must, in the nature of the thing, be an instantaneous change; there must be a last moment wherein it does exist, and a first moment wherein it does not. "But should we in preaching insist both on one and the other?" Certainly we must insist on the gradual change; and that earnestly and continually. And are there not reasons why we should insist on the instantaneous also? If there be such a blessed change before death, should we not encourage all believers to expect it? and the rather, because constant experience shows, the more earnestly they expect this, the more swiftly and steadily does the gradual work of God go on in their soul; the more watchful they are against all sin, the more careful to grow in grace, the more zealous of good works, and the more punctual in their attendance on all the ordinances of God. Whereas, just the contrary effects are observed whenever this expectation ceases. They are "saved by hope," by this hope of a total change, with a gradually increasing salvation. Destroy this hope, and that salvation stands still, or rather, decreases daily. Therefore whoever would advance the gradual change in believers, should strongly insist on the instantaneous. — *Works*, vol. v. p. 233.

SECTION XXVII.

MISCELLANEOUS.

"THESE [sin and depravity] are coupled together as though they were the same; but they are not the same thing. The *guilt* is one thing, the *power* another, and the *being* yet another. That believers are delivered from the *guilt* and *power* of sin we allow; that they are delivered from the being of it we deny." — *Wesley's Sermons*, vol. i. p. 113.

"*What sins are consistent with justifying faith?*"

"No wilful sin. If a believer wilfully sins, he casts away his faith. Neither is it possible he should have justifying faith again, without previously repenting." — *Works*, vol. v. p. 195.

"In the sermon on Salvation by Faith, I say, 'He that is born of God sinneth not' (a proposition explained at large in another sermon, and every where either explicitly or virtually connected with, 'while he keepeth himself'), 'by any sinful desire; any unholy desire he stifleth in the birth.' (Assuredly he does, 'while he keepeth himself'). 'Nor doth he sin by infirmities, for his infirmities have no concurrence of his will; and without this they are not properly sins." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 535.

"I observe the spirit and experience of these two run exactly parallel. Constant communion with God the Father and the Son fills their hearts with humble love. Now this is what I always did, and do now, mean by perfection. And

this I believe many have attained, on the same evidence that I believe many are justified. May God increase their number a thousand-fold!" — *Journal* March, 1760.

"Wednesday, 12. — Having desired that as many as could of the neighboring towns (about Leeds) who believed they were saved from sin, would meet me, I spent the greatest part of this day in examining them one by one. The testimony of some I could not receive; but concerning the far greatest part, it is plain (unless they could be supposed to tell wilful and deliberate lies), 1. That they feel no inward sin; and to the best of their knowledge commit no outward sin: 2. That they see and love God every moment, and pray, rejoice, give thanks evermore: 3. That they have constantly as clear a witness from God of sanctification as they have of justification. Now in this I do rejoice, and will rejoice, call it what you please; and I would to God thousands had experienced thus much: let them afterward experience as much more as God pleases." — *Journal*, March, 1760.

"Sunday, 4, was a day of solemn joy, equal to any I had seen in Dublin. At the love-feast in the evening, it appeared that God had now visited Limerick also. Five persons desired to return thanks to God, for a clear sense of His pardoning love: several others, for an increase of faith and for deliverance from doubts and fears. And two gave a plain, simple account, of the manner wherein God had cleansed their hearts, so that they now felt no anger, pride, or self-will; but continual love, and prayer, and praise." — *Journal*, July, 1762.

To Mr. S. F., 1762: —

"The proposition which I will hold is this: 'A person may be cleansed from all sinful tempers, and yet need the atoning blood.' For what? For 'negligences and ignor-

ances;' for both words and actions, (as well as omissions), which are, in a sense, transgressions of the perfect law. And I believe no one is clear of these till he lays down this corruptible body." — *Works,* vol. vi. p. 741.

To Rev. Mr. F., 1762: —

"So far I can go with you, but no farther. I still say, and without any self-contradiction, I know no persons living who are so deeply conscious of their needing Christ both as prophet, priest, and king, as those who believe themselves, and whom I believe, to be cleansed from all sin; I mean, from all pride, anger, evil desire, idolatry, and unbelief. These very persons feel more than ever their own ignorance, littleness of grace, coming short of the full mind that was in Christ, and walking less accurately than they might have done after their Divine Pattern: are more convinced of the insufficiency of all they are, have, or do, to bear the eye of God without a Mediator; are more penetrated with the sense of the want of Him than ever they were before." — *Works,* vol. vii. p. 36.

To Charles Wesley, 1766: —

"The voice of one who truly loves God surely is, —

> "'Tis worse than death my God to love,
> And not my God alone.

Such a one is certainly 'as much athirst for sanctification, as he was once for justification.' You remember, this used to be one of *your* constant questions. It is not now; therefore you are altered in your sentiments: and unless we come to an explanation, we shall inevitably contradict each other. But this ought not to be in any wise, if it can possibly be avoided.

"I still think, to disbelieve all the professors amounts to a denial of the thing. For if there be no living witness of

what we have preached for twenty years, I cannot, dare not, preach it any longer. The whole comes to one point: is there, or is there not, any instantaneous sanctification between justification and death? I say, Yes." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 668.

To Rev. John Fletcher, 1768: —

"I will go a step farther. I seldom find it profitable to converse with any who are not athirst for full salvation; and who are not big with earnest expectation of receiving it every moment. Now, you find none of these among those we are speaking of; but many, on the contrary, who are in various ways, directly or indirectly, opposing this blessed work of God; the work, I mean, which God is carrying on throughout this kingdom, by unlearned and plain men." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 686.

To a young disciple, 1772: —

"The difference between temptation and sin is generally plain enough to all that are simple of heart; but in some exempt cases it is not plain: there we want the unction of the Holy One. Voluntary humility, calling every defect a sin, is not well pleasing to God. Sin, properly speaking, is neither more nor less than 'a voluntary transgression of a known law of God.'" — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 94.

"'Holy solitaries' is a phrase no more consistent with the Gospel than holy adulterers. The Gospel of Christ knows of no religion, but social; no holiness but social holiness. 'Faith working by love' is the length and breadth and depth and height of Christian perfection. 'This commandment have we from Christ, that he who loves God, love his brother also;' and that we manifest our love 'by doing good unto all men; especially to them that are of the household of faith." — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 393.

"From long experience and observation, I am inclined to think, that whoever finds redemption in the blood of Jesus, whoever is justified, has then the choice of walking in the higher or the lower path. I believe the Holy Spirit at that time sets before him the 'more excellent way,' and incites him to walk therein, to choose the narrowest path in the narrow way, to aspire after the heights and depths of holiness, — after the entire image of God. But if he does not accept this offer, he insensibly declines into the lower order of Christians. He still goes on in what may be called a good way, serving God in his degree, and finds mercy in the close of life, through the blood of the covenant.

"I would be far from quenching the smoking flax, — from discouraging those who serve God in a low degree. But I could not wish them to stop here; I would encourage them to come up higher, without thundering hell and damnation in their ears. Without condemning the way wherein they were, telling them it is the way to destruction, I will endeavor to point out to them what is, in every respect, 'a more excellent way.'

"Let it be well remembered, I do not affirm that all who do not walk in this way are in the high-road to hell. But this much I must affirm, they will not have so high a place in heaven as they would have had, if they had chosen the better part." — *Sermons,* vol. ii. p. 267.

To Rev. Charles Wesley, in 1772: —

"If we only join faith and works in all our preaching, we shall not fail of a blessing. But of all preaching, what is usually called Gospel preaching is the most useless, if not the most mischievous, — a dull, yea, or lively harangue on the sufferings of Christ, or salvation by faith, without strongly inculcating holiness. I see, more and more, that this naturally tends to drive holiness out of the world." — *Works,* English edition, vol. xii. p. 130.

SECTION XXVIII.

HOW FAR DID MR. WESLEY CHANGE HIS VIEWS ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

THAT Mr. Wesley's mind underwent some changes on this subject, and that there are a few seeming contradictions in his writings at different periods of his life, may be admitted, though they have been much and improperly magnified by some writers. His written views on the subject are scattered through his journals, sermons, letters, articles, and controversies, during a period of sixty-six years; and it is unreasonable to suppose, that during so long a time, no seeming contradictions should be found.

That he changed his views in any of the essential items of its *nature* and *properties*, he repeatedly denies in the most positive terms. The changes in his mind, so far as his writings show, are the following: —

1. For a little period in early life he held that one entirely sanctified could not fall. He soon saw his mistake, and renounced it. He says: —

"I do not include an impossibility of falling from it, either in part or in whole. Therefore I retract several expressions in our hymns, which partly express, partly imply, such impossibility. . . . Formerly, we thought one saved from sin could not fall, now we know the contrary." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 219.

In writing to his brother Charles in 1767, he says: —

"Can one who has attained it fall? Formerly I thought not; but you (with Thomas Walsh and John Jones) convinced me of my mistake. — Vol. vi. p. 669.

2. In 1741, he published a volume of hymns, in the preface of which he says: —

"They (those entirely sanctified) are freed from self-will, desiring nothing but the holy and perfect will of God; not supplies in want, not ease in pain, nor life, or death, or any creature. . . . The unction of the Holy One teacheth them every hour what they shall do, and what they shall speak, nor therefore have they any need to reason concerning it. They are in one sense freed from temptations. . . . At all times their souls are even and calm, their hearts are steadfast and unmovable." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 492.

Mr. Wesley corrected these by foot-notes soon after the book was published, saying, "This is too strong. . . . This is far too strong. . . . Frequently this is the case. . . . Sometimes they have no need." He says at that time (1741), he gave "the strongest account he ever gave of Christian perfection; indeed, too strong in more than one particular, as is observed in the notes annexed."

These are the only cases in which we find, in all his writings, of his changing his views on this subject. Some have claimed that before the great revival of sanctification in 1760–2, he taught a gradual sanctification by growth and works. Mr. Wesley, in 1741, twenty years before that great work, says: —

"Can anything be more clear: —

1. That here, also, is as full and high a salvation as we have ever spoken of?

2. That this is spoken of as receivable by mere faith, and as hindered only by unbelief?

3. That this faith, and consequently the salvation which it brings, is spoken of as given in an instant?

4. That it is supposed that instant may be now! that we need not stay another moment? that 'now,' the very 'now is the accepted time, now is the day of' this full 'salvation,' and,

5. Lastly, that if any speak otherwise, he is the person that brings new doctrines among us." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 494.

In a letter to Bell and Owen, in 1762, he says: —

"You have over and over denied instantaneous sanctification to me; but I have known and taught it (and so has my brother, as our writings show) above these twenty years." — *Journal*, Oct., 1762.

This states that he and his brother Charles taught instantaneous sanctification from 1742. There are two or three instances in Mr. Wesley's writings where it has been claimed he teaches sanctification by growth. The extracts are the following: —

"When we are born again, then our sanctification, our inward and outward holiness, begins; and thenceforward we are gradually to 'grow up into Him our living Head.' This expression of the apostle admirably illustrates the difference between one and the other, and further points out the exact analogy there is between natural and spiritual things. A child is born of a woman in a moment, or at least in a very short time; afterwards, he gradually and slowly grows, till he attains to the stature of a man. In like manner, a child is born of God in a short time, if not in a moment. But it is by slow degrees that he afterwards grows up to the meas-

ure of the full stature of Christ. The same relation, therefore, which there is between our natural birth and our growth, there is also between our birth and our sanctification." — *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 406.

In his sermon on "God's Vineyard," he says: —

"And as in the natural birth a man is born at once, and then grows larger, and stronger by degrees, so in the spiritual birth, a man is born at once, and then gradually increases in spiritual stature and strength. The new birth, therefore, is the first point in sanctification, which may increase more and more unto the perfect day." — *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 390.

To Miss Cook, 1785: —

"And how soon may you be made a partaker of sanctification! And not only by a slow and insensible growth in grace, but by the power of the Highest overshadowing you, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, so as utterly to abolish sin, and to renew you in His whole image! If you are simple of heart, if you are willing to receive the heavenly gift as a little child, without reasoning, why may you not receive it now? He is nigh that sanctifieth; He is with you; He is knocking at the door of your heart!" — *Works*, vol. vii. p. 199.

There is an apparent discrepancy between these statements and the whole trend of his teachings on this subject, and if he had said no more upon this subject than these brief extracts contain, it might, with some plausibility, be claimed that he taught a gradual sanctification; but all must see that in hundreds of instances he taught a different doctrine, and that while he taught growth, culture, and development, both before and after entire sanctification, he at the same time held that entire sanc-

tification was by *faith* and not by *works*, that it was *instantaneous* and not by growth, and a supernatural and Divine work. (See Section viii.)

It will be noted by the careful reader of Mr. Wesley, that up to 1759, his views respecting the *manner of seeking* entire sanctification were not as clear and definite as during the last thirty years of his life. (See *Tyerman*, vol. i. p. 498.)

Mr. Wesley repeatedly denies any radical change in his views, although he admits a few *overstatements* and *less distinctness* during a part of his early ministry. It may be safely averred, that while he gives us no case of gradual sanctification by growth, he does positively teach instantaneous sanctification by faith, and gives us several thousand such instances. He also asserts that he never knew a case of gradual entire sanctification. (See *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 223.)

In 1777, in the last revision of his "Plain Account of Christian Perfection," he says, respecting his sermon on "The Circumcision of the Heart," which was preached in 1733, before the University at Oxford: —

"This sermon was composed the first of all my writings which have been published. This was the view of religion I then had, which even then I scrupled not to term *perfection*. This is the view I have of it now, without any material addition or diminution." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 485.

In 1739, he wrote his first tract expressly on the subject, and says respecting it: —

"Is it not easy to see that this is the very same doctrine which I believe and teach at this day (1777), not adding one point, either to that inward or outward holiness which I

maintained eight and thirty years ago? And it is the same which, by the grace of God, I have continued to teach from that time till now, as will appear to every impartial person from the extracts subjoined below." — *Works,* vol. vi. p. 488.

In his last revision of "The Plain Account," in 1777, after quoting from his sermon on "Christian Perfection," which was written in 1741, and a volume of hymns at the same time, he says: —

"There is nothing which we have since advanced upon the subject, either in verse or prose, which is not either directly or indirectly contained in this preface; so that whether our present doctrine be right or wrong, it is, however, the same which we taught from the beginning." — *Works,* vol. vi. p. 493.

In 1742, he published a volume of hymns, many of which treated expressly on this subject, and in regard to them, he says: —

"This is the doctrine which we preached from the beginning, and which we preach at this day. Indeed, by viewing it in every point of light, and comparing it again and again with the Word of God on the one hand, and the experience of the children of God on the other, we saw further into the nature and properties of Christian perfection. But still there is no contrariety at all between our first and our last sentiments. . . . And we have the same conception of it now, without either addition or diminution." — *Works,* vol. vi. p. 495.

After quoting extracts from the conferences of 1744, 1745, 1746, and 1747, he says: —

"From these extracts it undeniably appears, not only what was mine and my brother's judgment, but what was

the judgment of all the preachers in connection with us in the years 1744, 1745, 1746, and 1747. Nor do I remember that, in any one of these conferences, we had one dissenting voice." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 499.

After quoting extracts from his writings in 1752, he says: —

"I have been the more large in these extracts, because hence it appears beyond all possibility of exception, that to this day both my brother and I maintain: —

1. That Christian perfection is that loving God and our neighbors which implies deliverance from sin.
2. That it is received merely by faith.
3. That it is given instantaneously in a moment.
4. That we are to expect it, not at death, but every moment; that now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 500.

After giving a general survey of it on every side, in 1777, he says: —

"Now take it in which of these views you please (for there is no material difference), and this is the whole and sole perfection, as a train of writings prove to a demonstration which I have believed and taught for these forty years, from the year 1725 to the year 1765." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 530.

In 1778, when Mr. Wesley was seventy-five years of age, he says in his journal: —

"I know not that I can write a better (sermon) on the circumcision of the heart, than I did five and forty years ago. . . . Forty years ago, I knew and preached every Christian doctrine which I preach now." — *Journal*, Sept., 1778.

A CHRONOLOGICAL EPITOME.

1. Mr. Wesley was born June 17, 1703.
2. He died March 2, 1791, aged 88.
3. In 1733, he wrote and delivered before the Oxford University, his sermon on "The Circumcision of the Heart," at the age of thirty.
4. In 1739 he wrote his tract titled "The Character of a Methodist," which he says was the first tract he ever wrote on the subject of Christian perfection.
5. He published a volume of hymns and sacred poems, in 1739, in which his and his brother's sentiments on the subject of holiness were presented.
6. After an interview with Dr. Gibson, Bishop of London, in 1740, he wrote his sermon on "Christian Perfection," in his thirty-seventh year.
7. In 1741, he published a second volume of hymns in which he and his brother gave the strongest account of Christian perfection they ever taught, and in which were some things too strong, which he soon corrected.
8. He published in 1742, a third volume of hymns in which he spoke more largely than ever before on the subject.
9. His first conference was held in 1744, at which the subject of sanctification was seriously considered, and their teachings were reviewed, the substance of which he gives in his works.
10. He published his "Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," in 1744.

11. In 1749 he and his brother published two volumes of hymns and sacred poems; and as they were published in his absence there were some things in them which he did not approve.
12. He issued in 1752 a second edition of the hymns of 1749, with a correction of some mistakes.
13. At the conference in 1759 he largely considered the doctrine, and at its close published his "Thoughts on Christian Perfection."
14. In 1761 he wrote his "Further Thoughts on Christian Perfection."
15. The great revival of holiness began in London in 1762, and spread in succeeding years over England and Ireland.
16. In 1762 he retired to Lewisham and wrote his sermon on "Sin in Believers."
17. He wrote in 1764, a series of "Short Propositions" on the subject, as afterwards inserted in his "Plain Account," on pages 166–169.
18. The sermon on "The Scripture Way of Salvation," was written in 1765.
19. "The Plain Account," he wrote in 1766, and made it part of the course of study at the conference in Leeds in 1766.
20. The questions in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, used in the ordination service — "Have you faith in Christ? Are you going on unto perfection? Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life? Are you groaning after it," were used by Mr. Wesley first at the conference at Leeds, in 1766.
21. His sermon on "Repentance of Believers," was written in 1767.
22. His second sermon on "Perfection" was written in 1785, six years before his death.

SECTION XXX.

PLAIN ACCOUNT OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

AS BELIEVED AND TAUGHT

BY THE REV. MR. JOHN WESLEY,

FROM THE YEAR 1725 TO THE YEAR 1777.

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1. WHAT I purpose in the following papers, is, to give a plain and distinct account of the steps by which I was led, during a course of many years, to embrace the doctrine of Christian perfection. This I owe to the serious part of mankind, those who desire to know all "the truth as it is in Jesus." And these only are concerned in questions of this kind. To these I would nakedly declare the thing as it is, endeavoring all along to show, from one period to another, both what I thought, and why I thought so.

2. In the year 1725, being in the twenty-third year of my age, I met with Bishop Taylor's "Rule and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying." In reading several parts of this book, I was exceedingly affected; that part in particular which relates to purity of intention. Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God, all my thoughts, and words, and actions; being thoroughly convinced, there was no medium; but that every part of my life (not some only)

FOOT-NOTE. — Without making any changes in "The Plain Account," as originally published in Mr. Wesley's works, we have taken the liberty of dividing it by headings, which we think makes it more readable.

must either be a sacrifice to God, or myself, that is, in effect, to the devil.

Can any serious person doubt of this, or find a medium between serving God and serving the devil?

3. In the year 1726, I met with Kempis's "Christian's Pattern." The nature and extent of inward religion, the religion of the heart, now appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before. I saw, that giving even all my life to God (supposing it possible to do this, and go no farther) would profit me nothing, unless I gave my heart, yea, all my heart to Him.

I saw, that "simplicity of intention, and purity of affection," one design in all we speak or do, and one desire ruling all our tempers, are indeed "the wings of the soul," without which she can never ascend to the mount of God.

4. A year or two after, Mr. Law's "Christian Perfection" and "Serious Call" were put into my hands. These convinced me, more than ever, of the absolute impossibility of being half a Christian; and I determined, through His grace (the absolute necessity of which I was deeply sensible of), to be all devoted to God, to give Him all my soul, my body, and my substance.

Will any considerate man say, that this is carrying matters too far? or that anything less is due to Him who has given Himself for us, than to give Him ourselves, all we have, and all we are.

5. In the year 1729, I began not only to read, but to study, the Bible as the one, the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion. Hence I saw, in a clearer and clearer light, the indispensable necessity of having "the mind which was in Christ," and of "walking as Christ also walked;" even of having, not some part only, but all the mind which was in Him; and of walking as he walked, not only in many or in most respects, but in all things. And

this was the light, wherein at this time I generally considered religion, as a uniform following of Christ, an entire inward and outward conformity to our Master. Nor was I afraid of anything more, than of bending this rule to the experience of myself or of other men; of allowing myself in any the least disconformity to our grand Exemplar.

SERMON ON "THE CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART," BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY AT OXFORD.

6. On January 1, 1733, I preached before the university, in St. Mary's Church, on "the Circumcision of the Heart;" an account of which I gave in these words: "It is that habitual disposition of soul which, in the sacred writings, is termed holiness; and which directly implies, the being cleansed from sin, 'from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit;' and, by consequence, the being endued with those virtues which were in Christ Jesus; the being so 'renewed in the image of our mind,' as to be 'perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.'" — Vol. i. p. 148.

In the same sermon I observed, "'Love is the fulfilling of the law, the end of the commandment.' It is not only 'the first and great' command, but all the commandments, in one. 'Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise,' they are all comprised in this one word, love. In this is perfection, and glory, and happiness: the royal law of heaven and earth is this, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." The one perfect good shall be your one ultimate end. One thing shall ye desire for its own sake, — the fruition of Him who is all in all. One happiness shall ye propose to your souls, even a union with Him that made them, the having 'fellowship with the Father and the Son,' the being 'joined to the Lord in one Spirit.' One

design ye are to pursue to the end of time, — the enjoyment of God in time and in eternity. Desire other things, so far as they tend to this; love the creature, as it leads to the Creator. But in every step you take, be this the glorious point that terminates your view. Let every affection, and thought, and word, and action, be subordinate to this. Whatever ye desire or fear, whatever ye seek or shun, whatever ye think, speak, or do, be it in order to your happiness in God, the sole end, as well as source, of your being."— *Ib.* pp. 150, 151.

I concluded in these words: "Here is the sum of the perfect law, the circumcision of the heart. Let the spirit return to God that gave it, with the whole train of its affections. Other sacrifices from us He would not, but the living sacrifice of the heart hath He chosen. Let it be continually offered up to God through Christ, in flames of holy love. And let no creature be suffered to share with Him; for He is a jealous God. His throne will He not divide with another; He will reign without a rival. Be no design, no desire admitted there, but what has Him for its ultimate object. This is the way wherein those children of God once walked, who being dead still speak to us: 'Desire not to live but to praise His name; let all your thoughts, words, and works tend to His glory.' 'Let your soul be filled with so entire a love to Him, that you may love nothing but for His sake.' 'Have a pure intention of heart, a steadfast regard to His glory in all our actions.' 'For then, and not till then, is that mind in us, which was also in Christ Jesus, when in every motion of our heart, in every word of our tongue, in every work of our hands, we pursue nothing but in relation to Him, and in subordination to His pleasure;' when we too neither think, nor speak, nor act, to fulfil 'our own will, but the will of Him that sent us;' when, 'whether

we eat or drink, or whatever we do,' we do it all 'to the glory of God.'" — *Ib.* p. 153.

It may be observed, this sermon was composed the first of all my writings which have been published. This was the view of religion I then had, which even then I scrupled not to term *perfection*. This is the view I have of it now, without any material addition or diminuition. And what is there here, which any man of understanding, who believes the Bible, can object to? What can he deny, without flatly contradicting the Scripture? What retrench, without taking from the Word of God?

In the same sentiment did my brother and I remain (with all those young gentlemen in derision termed *Methodists*) till we embarked for America, in the latter end of 1735. It was the next year, while I was at Savannah, that I wrote the following lines: —

Is there a thing beneath the sun,
That strives with thee my heart to share?
Ah! tear it thence, and reign alone,
The Lord of every motion there!

In the beginning of the year 1738, as I was returning from thence, the cry of my heart was,

O grant that nothing in my soul
May dwell, but Thy pure love alone!
O may Thy love possess me whole,
My joy, my treasure, and my crown
Strange fires far from my heart remove
My every act, word, thought, be love!

I never heard that anyone objected to this. And, indeed, who can object? Is not this the language, not only of every believer, but of everyone that is truly awakened? But

what have I wrote, to this day, which is either stronger or plainer.

8. In August following, I had a long conversation with Arvid Gradin, in Germany. After he had given me an account of his experience, I desired him to give me, in writing, a definition of "the full assurance of faith," which he did in the following words: —

Requies in sanguine Christi; firma fiducia in Deum, et persuasio de gratia Divina; tranquillitas mentis summa, atque serenitas et pax; cum absentia omnis desiderii carnalis, et cessatione peccatorum etiam internorum.

"Repose in the blood of Christ; a firm confidence in God, and persuasion of His favor; the highest tranquility, serenity, and peace of mind, with a deliverance from every fleshly desire, and a cessation of all, even inward sins."

This was the first account I ever heard from any living man, of what I had before learned myself from the oracles of God, and had been praying for (with the little company of my friends), and expecting, for several years.

9. In 1739, my brother and I published a volume of "Hymns and Sacred Poems." In many of these we declared our sentiments strongly and explicitly. So, page 24, —

Turn the full stream of nature's tide;
Let all our actions tend
To Thee, their source; Thy love the guide,
Thy glory be the end.

Earth then a scale to heaven shall be;
Sense shall point out the road;
The creatures all shall lead to Thee,
And all we taste be God.

Again, —

Lord, arm me with Thy Spirit's might,
Since I am call'd by Thy great name:
In Thee my wand'ring thoughts unite,
Of all my works be Thou the aim;
Thy love attend me all my days,
And my sole business be Thy praise. (p. 122.)

Again, —

Eager for Thee I ask and pant,
So strong the principle Divine,
Carries me out with sweet constraint,
Till all my hallow'd soul be Thine;
Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea,
And lost in Thine immensity! (p. 125.)

Once more, —

Heavenly Adam, life Divine,
Change my nature into Thine;
Move and spread throughout my soul,
Actuate and fill the whole. (p. 153.)

It would be easy to cite many more passages to the same effect. But these are sufficient to show, beyond contradiction, what our sentiments then were.

THE FIRST TRACT HE WROTE ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

10. The first tract I ever wrote expressly on this subject was published in the latter end of this year. That none might be prejudiced before they read it, I gave it the indifferent title of "The Character of a Methodist." In this I described a perfect Christian, placing in the front, "Not as though I had already attained." Part of it I subjoin without any alteration: —

"A Methodist is one who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength. God is the joy of his heart, and the desire of

his soul, which is continually crying, 'Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth whom I desire besides thee.' My God and my all! 'Thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.' He is therefore happy in God; yea, always happy, as having in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life, and overflowing his soul with peace and joy. Perfect love having now cast out fear, he rejoices evermore. Yea, his joy is full, and all his bones cry out, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten me again unto a living hope of an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for me.'

"And he who hath this hope, thus full of immortality, in every thing giveth thanks, as knowing this (whatsoever it is) is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning him. From Him, therefore, he cheerfully receives all, saying, 'Good is the will of the Lord;' and whether He giveth or taketh away, equally blessing the name of the Lord. Whether in ease or pain, whether in sickness or health, whether in life or death, he giveth thanks from the ground of the heart to Him who orders it for good: into whose hands he hath wholly committed his body and soul, 'as into the hands of a faithful Creator.' He is, therefore, anxiously 'careful for nothing,' as having 'cast all his care on Him that careth for him;' and 'in all things' resting on Him, after 'making' his 'request known to Him with thanksgiving.'

"For, indeed, he 'prays without ceasing;' at all times the language of his heart is this, 'Unto Thee is my mouth, though without a voice; and my silence speaketh unto Thee.' His heart is lifted up to God at all times, and in all places. In this he is never hindered, much less interrupted, by any person or thing. In retirement or company, in

leisure, business, or conversation, his heart is ever with the Lord. Whether he lie down, or rise up, 'God is in all his thoughts:' he walks with God continually; having the loving eye of his soul fixed on Him, and everywhere 'seeing Him that is invisible.'

"And loving God, he 'loves his neighbor as himself;' he loves every man as his own soul. He loves his enemies, yea, and the enemies of God. And if it be not in his power to 'do good to them that hate' him, yet he ceases not to 'pray for them,' though they spurn his love, and still 'despitefully use him, and persecute him.'

"For he is 'pure in heart.' Love has purified his heart from envy, malice, wrath, and every unkind temper. It has cleansed him from pride, whereof 'only cometh contention;' and he hath now 'put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering.' And, indeed, all possible ground for contention, on his part, is cut off. For none can take from him what he desires, seeing he 'loves not the world, nor any of the things of the world;' but 'all his desire is unto God, and to the remembrance of His name.'

"Agreeable to this his one desire, is the one design of his life; namely, 'to do not his own will, but the will of Him that sent him.' His one intention at all times and in all places is, not to please himself, but Him whom his soul loveth. He hath a single eye; and because his 'eye is single, his whole body is full of light. The whole is light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth enlighten the house.' God reigns alone; all that is in the soul is 'holiness to the Lord.' There is not a motion in his heart but is according to His will. Every thought that arises points to Him, and is in 'obedience to the law of Christ.'

"And the tree is known by its fruits. For, as he loves God, so he 'keeps His commandments;' not only some, or

most of them, but all, from the least to the greatest. He is not content to 'keep the whole law and offend in one point,' but has in all points 'a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man.' Whatever God has forbidden, he avoids; whatever God has enjoined, he does. 'He runs the way of God's commandments,' now He hath set his heart at liberty. It is his glory and joy so to do; it is his daily crown of rejoicing, to 'do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven."

"All the commandments of God he accordingly keeps, and that with all his might; for his obedience is in proportion to his love, the source from whence it flows. And therefore, loving God with all his heart, he serves Him with all his strength; he continually presents his soul and 'body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God;' entirely and without reserve devoting himself, all he has, all he is, to His glory. All the talents he has, he constantly employs according to his Master's will; every power and faculty of his soul, every member of his body.

"By consequence, 'whatsoever he doeth, it is all to the glory of God.' In all his employments of every kind, he not only aims at this, which is implied in having a single eye, but actually attains it; his business and his refreshments, as well as his prayers, all serve to this great end. Whether he 'sit in the house, or walk by the way,' whether he lie down, or rise up, he is promoting, in all he speaks or does, the one business of his life. Whether he put on his apparel, or labor, or eat and drink, or divert himself from too wasting labor, it all tends to advance the glory of God, by peace and good will among men. His one invariable rule is this: 'Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, even the Father through Him.'

"Nor do the customs of the world at all hinder his 'run-

ning the race which is set before him.' He cannot, therefore, 'lay up treasures upon earth,' no more than he can take fire into his bosom. He cannot speak evil of his neighbor, any more than he can lie either for God or man. He cannot utter an unkind word of anyone; for love keeps the door of his lips. He cannot 'speak idle words; no corrupt conversation' ever 'comes out of his mouth;' as is all that is not 'good to the use of edifying,' not fit to 'minister grace to the hearers.' But 'whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are' justly 'of good report,' he thinks, speaks, and acts, 'adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.'"

These are the very words wherein I largely declared, for the first time, my sentiments of Christian perfection. And, is it not easy to see, (1.) That this is the very point at which I aimed all along from the year 1725; and more determinately from the year 1730, when I began to be *homo unius libri*, "a man of one book," regarding none, comparatively, but the Bible? Is it not easy to see, (2.) That this is the very same doctrine which I believe and teach at this day; not adding one point, either to that inward or outward holiness which I maintained eight-and-thirty years ago? And it is the same which, by the grace of God, I have continued to teach from that time till now; as will appear to every impartial person from the extracts subjoined below.

11. I do not know that any writer has made any objection against that tract to this day; and for some time, I did not find much opposition upon the head, at least, not from serious persons. But after a time, a cry arose, and, what a little surprised me, among religious men, who affirmed, not that I stated perfection wrong, but that, 'there is no perfection on earth;" nay, and fell vehemently on my brother and me for affirming the contrary. We scarce ex-

pected so rough an attack from these; especially as we were clear on justification by faith, and careful to ascribe the whole salvation to the mere grace of God. But what most surprised us, was, that we were said to "dishonor Christ," by asserting that He "saveth to the uttermost;" by maintaining He will reign in our hearts alone, and subdue all things to Himself.

His Sermon on Christian Perfection.

12. I think it was in the latter end of the year 1740, that I had a conversation with Dr. Gibson, then bishop of London, at Whitehall. He asked me what I meant by perfection. I told him without any disguise or reserve. When I ceased speaking, he said, "Mr. Wesley, if this be all you mean, publish it to all the world. If anyone then can confute what you say, he may have free leave." I answered, "My lord, I will;" and accordingly wrote and published, the sermon on Christian perfection.

In this I endeavored to show, (1.) In what sense Christians are not, (2.) In what sense they are, perfect.

"(1.) In what sense they are not. They are not perfect in knowledge. They are not free from ignorance, no, nor from mistake. We are no more to expect any living man to be infallible, than to be omniscient. They are not free from infirmities, such as weakness or slowness of understanding, irregular quickness or heaviness of imagination. Such in another kind are impropriety of language, ungracefulness of pronunciation; to which one might add a thousand nameless defects, either in conversation or behavior. From such infirmities as these none are perfectly freed till their spirits return to God; neither can we expect till then to be wholly freed from temptation; for 'the servant is not above his master.' But neither in this sense is there any

absolute perfection on earth. There is no perfection of degrees, none which does not admit of a continual increase.

"(2.) In what sense then are they perfect? Observe, we are not now speaking of babes in Christ, but adult Christians. But even babes in Christ are so far perfect as not to commit sin. This St. John affirms expressly; and it cannot be disproved by the examples of the Old Testament. For what if the holiest of the ancient Jews did sometimes commit sin? We cannot infer from hence, that, 'all Christians do and must commit sin as long as they live.'

"But does not the Scriptures say, 'A just man sinneth seven times a day?' It does not. Indeed, it says, 'A just man falleth seven times.' But this is quite another thing; for, First, the words, *a day*, are not in the text. Secondly, here is no mention of *falling into sin* at all. What is here mentioned, is *falling into temporal affliction.*

"But elsewhere Solomon says, 'There is no man that sinneth not.' Doubtless thus it was in the days of Solomon; yea, and from Solomon to Christ there was then no man that sinned not. But whatever was the case of those under the law, we may safely affirm, with St. John, that, since the Gospel was given, 'he that is born of God sinneth not.'

"The privileges of Christians are in no wise to be measured by what the Old Testament records concerning those who were under the Jewish dispensation; seeing the fulness of time is now come, the Holy Ghost is now given, the great salvation of God is now brought to men by the revelation of Jesus Christ. The kingdom of heaven is now set up on earth, concerning which the Spirit of God declared of old time (so far is David from being the pattern or standard of Christian perfection), 'He that is feeble among them, at that day, shall be as David, and the house of David shall be as the angel of the Lord before them,' Zech. xii. 8.

"But the Apostles themselves committed sin; Peter by

dissembling, Paul by his sharp contention with Barnabas. Suppose they did, will you argue thus: 'If two of the Apostles once committed sin, then all other Christians in all ages, do and must commit sin as long as they live?' Nay, God forbid we should thus speak. No necessity of sin was laid upon them; the grace of God was surely sufficient for them. And it is sufficient for us at this day.

"But St. James says, 'In many things we offend all.' True: but who are the persons here spoken of? Why, those many masters or teachers whom God had not sent; not the apostle himself, nor any real Christian. That in the word *we*, used by a figure of speech, common in all other as well as the inspired writings, the apostle could not possibly include himself, or any other true believer, appears, First, from the ninth verse, 'Therewith bless we God, and therewith bless curse we men.' Surely not we apostles! not we believers! Secondly, from the words preceding the text: 'My brethren, be not many masters,' or teachers, 'knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all.' *We!* Who? Not the apostles nor true believers, but they who were to 'receive the greater condemnation,' because of those many offenses. Nay, Thirdly, the verse itself proves, that, 'we offend all,' cannot be spoken either of all men or all Christians. For in it immediately follows the mention of a man who 'offends not,' as the *we* first mentioned did; from whom therefore he is professedly contradistinguished, and pronounced a 'perfect man.'

"But St. John himself says, 'If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves;' and, 'If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.'

"I answer, (1.) The tenth verse fixes the sense of the eighth: 'If we say we have no sin,' in the former, being explained by, 'If we say we have not sinned,' in the latter verse.

(2.) The point under consideration is not whether we have or have not sinned, heretofore; and neither of these verses asserts that we do sin, or commit sin now. (3.) The ninth verse explains both the eighth and tenth: 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' As if He had said, 'I have before affirmed, The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.' And no man can say, 'I need it not; I have no sin to be cleansed from. 'If we say, we have no sin,' that, 'we have not sinned, we deceive ourselves,' and make God a liar: but, 'if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just,' not only 'to forgive us our sins,' but also 'to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,' that we may 'go and sin no more.' In conformity, therefore, both to the doctrine of St. John, and the whole tenor of the New Testament, we fix this conclusion: A Christian is so far perfect, as not to commit sin.

"This is the glorious privilege of every Christian, yea, though he be but a babe in Christ. But it is only of grown Christians it can be affirmed, they are in such a sense perfect, as, Secondly, to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers. First from evil or sinful thoughts. Indeed, whence should they spring? 'Out of the heart of man,' if at all, 'proceed evil thoughts.' If, therefore, the heart be no longer evil, then evil thoughts no longer proceed out of it: for 'a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit.'

"And as they are freed from evil thoughts, so likewise from evil tempers. Everyone of these can say, with St. Paul, 'I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;'—words that manifestly describe a deliverance from inward as well as from outward sin. This is expressed both negatively, 'I live not,' my evil nature, the body of sin is destroyed; and positively, 'Christ liveth in me,' and, therefore, all that is holy, and just, and good. Indeed, both these, 'Christ liveth in me,' and, 'I live

not,' are inseparably connected. For what communion hath light with darkness; or Christ with Belial?

"He therefore, who liveth in these Christians hath 'purified their hearts by faith;' insomuch that everyone that has Christ in him, 'the hope of glory, purifieth himself even as He is pure.' He is purified from pride; for Christ was lowly in heart; he is pure from desire and self-will; for Christ desired only to do the will of the Father: and he is pure from anger, in the common sense of the word, for Christ was meek and gentle. I say, *in the common sense of the word;* for He is angry at sin, while He is grieved for the sinner. He feels a displacency at every offense against God, but only tender compassion to the offender.

"Thus doth Jesus save His people from their sins; not only from outward sins, but from the sins of their hearts. 'True,' say some, 'but not till death, not in this world.' Nay, St. John says, 'Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because, as He is, so are we in this world.' The apostle here, beyond all contradiction, speaks of himself and other living Christians, of whom he flatly affirms, that not only at or after death, but 'in this world,' they are 'as their Master.'

"Exactly agreeable to this are his words in the first chapter: 'God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' And again: 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' Now, it is evident the Apostle here speaks of a deliverance wrought in this world: for he saith not, The blood of Christ *will* cleanse (at the hour of death, or in the day of judgment), but it 'cleanseth,' at the time present, us living Christians 'from all sin.' And it is equally evident, that if any sin remain, we are not

cleansed from all sin. If *any* unrighteousness remain in the soul, it is not cleansed from all unrighteousness. Neither let any say that this relates to justification only, or the cleansing us from the guilt of sin: first, because this is confounding together what the Apostle clearly distinguishes, who mentions, first, 'to forgive us our sins,' and then 'to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' Secondly, because this is asserting justification by works, in the strongest sense possible; it is making all inward, as well as all outward, holiness, necessarily previous to justification. For if the cleansing here spoken of is no other than the cleansing us from the guilt of sin, then we are not cleansed from guilt, that is, not justified, unless on condition of walking 'in the light, as He is in the light.' It remains, then, that Christians are saved in this world from all sin, from all unrighteousness; that they are now in such a sense perfect, as not to commit sin, and to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers."

It could not be, but that a discourse of this kind, which directly contradicted the favorite opinion of many, who were esteemed by others, and possibly esteemed themselves, some of the best of Christians (whereas, if these things were so, they were not Christians at all), should give no small offense. Many answers or animadversions, therefore, were expected; but I was agreeably disappointed. I do not know that any appeared; so I went quietly on my way.

The Preface of His Second Volume of Hymns.

13. Not long after, I think in the spring, 1741, we published a second volume of hymns. As the doctrine was still much misunderstood, and consequently misrepresented, I judged it needful to explain yet farther upon the head which was done in the preface to it as follows: —

"This great gift of God, the salvation of our souls, is no other than the image of God fresh stamped on our hearts. It is a 'renewal of believers in the spirit of their minds, after the likeness of Him that created them.' God hath now laid 'the axe unto the root of the tree, purifying their hearts by faith,' and 'cleansing all the thoughts of their hearts by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit.' Having this hope, that they shall see God as He is, they 'purify themselves even as He is pure,' and are 'holy, as He that hath called them is holy, in all manner of conversation.' Not that they have already attained all that they shall attain, either are already in this sense perfect. But they daily 'go on from strength to strength, beholding' now, 'as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord.'

"And 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty'; such liberty 'from the law of sin and death,' as the children of this world will not believe, though a man declare it unto them. 'The Son hath made them free, who are thus 'born of God,' from that great root of sin and bitterness, pride. They feel that all their 'sufficiency is of God,' that it is He alone who 'is in all their thoughts,' and 'worketh in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure.' They feel that 'it is not they' that 'speak, but the Spirit of' their 'Father who speaketh' in them, and that whatsoever is done by their hands, 'the Father who is in them, He doeth the works.' So that God is to them all in all, and they are nothing in His sight. They are freed from self-will, as desiring nothing but the holy and perfect will of God: not supplies in want, not ease in pain,* nor life, or death, or any creature; but continually crying in their inmost soul, 'Father, Thy will be done.' They are freed from evil thoughts, so that

* This is too strong. Our Lord Himself desired ease in pain. He asked for it, only with resignation: "Not as I will," I desire, "but as Thou wilt."

they cannot enter into them, no, not for a moment. Aforetime, when an evil thought came in, they looked up, and it vanished away. But now it does not come in, there being no room for this, in a soul which is full of God. They are free from wanderings in prayer. Whensoever they pour out their hearts in a more immediate manner before God, they have no thought of anything past,* or absent, or to come, but of God alone. In times past, they had wandering thoughts darting in, which yet fled away like smoke; but now that smoke does not rise at all. They have no fear or doubt, either as to their state in general, or as to any particular action.† The 'unction from the Holy One' teacheth them every hour what they shall do, and what they shall speak;‡ nor, therefore, have they any need to reason concerning it § They are in one sense freed from temptations; for though numberless temptations fly about them, yet they trouble them not. ‖ At all times their souls are even and calm, their hearts are steadfast and unmovable. Their peace, flowing as a river, 'passeth all understanding,' and they 'rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.' For they 'are sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption,' having the witness in themselves, that 'there is laid up for' them a 'crown of righteousness, which the Lord will give' them 'in that day.' ¶

"Not that every one is a child of the devil, till he is thus renewed in love: on the contrary, whoever has 'a sure confidence in God, that, through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven,' he is a child of God, and, if he abide in Him, an heir of all the promises. Neither ought he in any wise

* This is far too strong. See the sermon "On Wandering Thoughts."
† Frequently this is the case; but only for a time.
‡ For a time it may be so; but not always.
§ Sometimes they have no need; at other times they have.
‖ Sometimes they do not; at other times they do, and that grievously.
¶ Not all who are saved from sin; many of them have not attained it yet.

to cast away his confidence, or to deny the faith he has received, because it is weak, or because it is 'tried with fire, so that his soul is 'in heaviness through manifold temptations.'

Not Fully Saved at Conversion.

"Neither dare we affirm, as some have done, that all this salvation is given at once. There is, indeed, an instantaneous, as well as a gradual, work of God in His children; and there wants not, we know, a cloud of witnesses, who have received, in one moment, either a clear sense of the forgiveness of their sins, or the abiding witness of the Holy Spirit. But we do not know a single instance, in any place, of a person's receiving, in one and the same moment, remission of sins, the abiding witness of the Spirit, and a new, a clean heart.

"Indeed, how God may work, we cannot tell; but the general manner wherein He does work, is this: those who once trusted in themselves that they were righteous, that they were rich, and increased in goods, and had need of nothing, are, by the Spirit of God applying His word, convinced that they are poor and naked. All the things that they have done are brought to their remembrance and set in array before them, so that they see the wrath of God hanging over their heads, and feel that they deserve the damnation of hell. In their trouble they cry unto the Lord, and He shows them that He hath taken away their sins, and opens the kingdom of Heaven in their hearts, — 'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' Sorrow and pain are fled away, and 'sin has no more dominion over' them. Knowing they are justified freely through faith in His blood, they 'have peace with God through Jesus Christ'; they 'rejoice in hope of the glory of God,' and 'the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts.'

What comes Subsequent to Conversion.

"In this peace they remain for days, or weeks, or months, and commonly suppose they shall not know war any more; till some of their old enemies, their bosom sins, or the sin which did most easily beset them (perhaps anger or desire), assault them again, and thrust sore at them, that they may fall. Then arises fear that they shall not endure to the end; and often doubt whether God has not forgotten them, or whether they did not deceive themselves in thinking their sins were forgiven. Under these clouds, especially if they reason with the devil, they go mourning all the day long. But it is seldom long before their Lord answers for Himself, sending them the Holy Ghost to comfort them, to bear witness continually with their spirits that they are the children of God. Then they are, indeed, meek, and gentle, and teachable, even as a little child.

Depravity in the Converted Heart.

"And now first do they see the ground of their heart,* which God before would not disclose unto them, lest the soul should fail before Him, and the spirit which He had made. Now they see all the hidden abominations there, the depths of pride, self-will, and hell; yet having the witness in themselves, 'Thou art an heir of God, a joint heir with Christ, even in the midst of this fiery trial;' which continually heightens both the strong sense they then have of their inability to help themselves, and the inexpressible hunger they feel after a full renewal in His image, in 'righteousness and true holiness.'

* Is it not astonishing, that while this book is extant, which was published four-and-twenty years ago, any one should face me down, that this is a new doctrine, and what I never taught before? —[This note was first published in the year 1765. —Edit.]

THE SECOND BLESSING.

"Then God is mindful of the desire of them that fear Him, and gives them a single eye, and a pure heart; He stamps upon them His own image and superscription; He createth them anew in Christ Jesus; He cometh unto them with His Son and blessed Spirit, and, fixing His abode in their souls, bringeth them into the 'rest which remaineth for the people of God.'"

Here I cannot but remark, (1.) That this is the strongest account we ever gave of Christian perfection, — indeed, too strong in more than one particular, as is observed in the notes annexed. (2.) That there is nothing which we have since advanced upon the subject, either in verse or prose, which is not either directly or indirectly contained in this preface. So that whether our present doctrine be right or wrong, it is, however, the same which we taught from the beginning.

14. I need not give additional proofs of this, by multiplying quotations from the volume itself. It may suffice to cite part of one hymn only, the last in that volume: —

Lord, I believe a rest remains,
To all thy people known;
A rest where pure enjoyment reigns,
And thou art loved alone;

A rest where all our soul's desire
Is fixed on things above;
Where doubt and pain and fear expire,
Cast out by perfect love.

From every evil motion freed,
(The Son hath made us free,)
On all the powers of hell we tread,
In glorious liberty.

Safe in the way of life, above
Death, earth, and hell we rise;
We find, when perfected in love,
Our long-sought paradise.

Oh, that I now the rest might know,
Believe and enter in!
Now, Saviour, now the power bestow,
And let me cease from sin!

Remove this hardness from my heart,
This unbelief remove;
To me the rest of faith impart,
The sabbath of Thy love.

Come, O my Saviour, come away!
Into my soul descend!
No longer from Thy creature stay,
My author and my end.

The bliss Thou hast for me prepared,
No longer be delayed:
Come, my exceeding great reward,
For whom I first was made.

Come Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
And seal me Thine abode!
Let all I am in Thee be lost;
Let all be lost in God!

Can anything be more clear than, (1.) That here, also, is as full and high a salvation as we have ever spoken of? (2.) That this is spoken of as receivable by mere faith, and as hindered only by unbelief? (3.) That this faith, and consequently the salvation which it brings, is spoken of as given in an instant? (4.) That it is supposed that instant may be now? that we need not stay another moment? that "now," the very "now is the accepted time? now is the day of" this full "salvation?" And, lastly, that, if any

speak otherwise, he is the person that brings new doctrine among us?

The Preface of His Third Volume of Hymns.

15. About a year after, namely, in the year 1742, we published another volume of hymns. The dispute being now at the height, we spoke upon the head more largely than ever before. Accordingly, abundance of the hymns in this volume treat expressly on this subject. And so does the preface, which, as it is short, it may not be amiss to insert entire: —

"(1.) Perhaps the general prejudice against Christian perfection may chiefly arise from a misapprehension of the nature of it. We willingly allow, and continually declare, there is no such perfection in this life, as implies either a dispensation from doing good, and attending all the ordinances of God, or a freedom from ignorance, mistake, temptation, and a thousand infirmities necessarily connected with flesh and blood.

"(2.) First. We not only allow, but earnestly contend, that there is no perfection in this life, which implies any dispensation from attending all the ordinances of God, or from doing good unto all men while we have time, though 'especially unto the household of faith.' We believe, that not only the babes in Christ, who have newly found redemption in His blood, but those also who are 'grown up into perfect men,' are indispensably obliged, as often as they have opportunity, 'to eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of Him,' and to 'search the Scriptures;' by fasting, as well as temperance, to 'keep their bodies under, and bring them into subjection;' and, above all, to pour out their souls in prayer, both secretly, and in the great congregation.

"(3.) We secondly believe that there is no such perfection in this life, as implies an entire deliverance, either from ignorance, or mistake, in things not essential to salvation, or from manifold temptations, or from numberless infirmities, wherewith the corruptible body more or less presses down the soul. We cannot find any ground in Scripture to suppose, that any inhabitant of a house of clay is wholly exempt either from bodily infirmities, or from ignorance of many things; or to imagine any is incapable of mistake, or falling into divers temptations.

"(4.) But whom, then, do you mean by 'one that is perfect'? We mean one in whom is 'the mind which was in Christ,' and who so 'walketh as Christ also walked'; a man 'that hath clean hands and a pure heart,' or that is 'cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit'; one in whom is 'no occasion of stumbling,' and who, accordingly, 'does not commit sin.' To declare this a little more particularly: we understand by that Scriptural expression, 'a perfect man,' one in whom God hath fulfilled His faithful word, 'From all your filthiness and from all your idols I will cleanse you: I will also save you from all your uncleannesses.' We understand, hereby, one whom God hath 'sanctified throughout in body, soul, and spirit'; one who 'walketh in the light as He is in the light, in whom is no darkness at all; the blood of Jesus Christ His Son having cleansed him from all sin.'

"(5.) This man can now testify to all mankind, 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' He is 'holy as God who called' him 'is holy,' both in heart and 'in all manner of conversation.' He 'loveth the Lord his God with all his heart,' and serveth him 'with all his strength.' He 'loveth his neighbor,' every man, 'as himself'; yea, 'as Christ loveth us'; them, in particular, that 'despitefully use Him and persecute Him, be-

cause they know not the Son, neither the Father.' Indeed, his soul is all love, filled with 'bowels of mercies, kindness, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering.' And his life agreeth thereto, full of 'the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labor of love.' 'And whatsoever' he 'doeth either in word or deed,' he 'doeth it all in the name,' in the love and power, 'of the Lord Jesus.' In a word, he doeth 'the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven.'

"(6.) This it is to be a perfect man, to be 'sanctified throughout;' even 'to have a heart so all-flaming with the love of God' (to use Archbishop Usher's words), 'as continually to offer up every thought, word, and work, as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God through Christ.' In every thought of our hearts, in every word of our tongues, in every work of our hands, to 'show forth His praise, who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.' O that both we, and all who seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity, may thus 'be made perfect in one!'"

He Denies any Change of His Views.

This is the doctrine which we preached from the beginning, and which we preach at this day. Indeed, by viewing it in every point of light, and comparing it again and again with the word of God on the one hand, and the experience of the children of God on the other, we saw farther into the nature and properties of Christian perfection. But still there is no contrariety at all between our first and our last sentiments. Our first conception of it was, it is to have "the mind which was in Christ," and to "walk as He walked;" to have all the mind that was in Him, and always to walk as He walked: in other words, to be inwardly and outwardly devoted to God; all devoted in heart and life. And we have the same conception of it now, without either addition or diminution.

16. The hymns concerning it in this volume are too numerous to transcribe. I shall only cite a part of three: —

Saviour from sin, I wait to prove
That Jesus is Thy healing name;
To lose when perfected in love,
Whate'er I have, or can, or am;
I stay me on Thy faithful word,
"The servant shall be as his Lord."

Answer that gracious end in me
For which Thy precious life was given;
Redeem from all iniquity,
Restore, and make me meet for heaven.
Unless Thou purge my every stain,
Thy suffering and my faith is vain.

Didst Thou not die, that I might live,
No longer to myself but Thee?
Might body, soul, and spirit give
To Him who gave himself for me?
Come then, my Master and my God,
Take the dear purchase of Thy blood.

Thy own peculiar servant claim,
For Thy own truth and mercy's sake;
Hallow in me Thy glorious name;
Me for Thine own this moment take;
And change and throughly purify;
Thine only may I live and die. (p. 80.)

Chose from the world, if now I stand,
Adorn'd with righteousness Divine;
If, brought into the promised land,
I justly call the Saviour mine;

The sanctifying Spirit pour,
To quench my thirst and wash me clean,
Now, Saviour, let the gracious shower
Descend, and make me pure from sin.

Purge me from every sinful blot:
My idols all be cast aside:
Cleanse me from every evil thought,
From all the filth of self and pride.

The hatred of the carnal mind
Out of my flesh at once remove:
Give me a tender heart, resign'd,
And pure, and full of faith and love.

Oh that I now, from sin releas'd,
Thy word might to the utmost prove,
Enter into Thy promised rest;
The Canaan of Thy perfect love!

Now let me gain perfection's height!
Now let me into nothing fall;
Be less than nothing in my sight,
And feel that Christ is all in all. (p. 258.)

Lord, I believe, Thy work of grace
Is perfect in the soul:
His heart is pure who sees Thy face,
His spirit is made whole.

From every sickness, by Thy word,
From every foul disease,
Saved, and to perfect health restored,
To perfect holiness:

He walks in glorious liberty,
To sin entirely dead:
The Truth, the Son hath made him free,
And he is free indeed.

Throughout his soul Thy glories shine,
His soul is all renew'd,
And deck'd in righteousness Divine,
And clothed and fill'd with God.

This is the rest, the life, the peace,
Which all Thy people prove;
Love is the bond of perfectness,
And all their soul is love.

O joyful sound of Gospel grace!
Christ shall in me appear;
I, even I, shall see His face,
I shall be holy here!

He visits now the house of clay,
He shakes his future home;
O wouldst Thou, Lord, on this glad day,
Into Thy temple come!

Come, O my God, Thyself reveal,
Fill all this mighty void;
Thou only canst my spirit fill:
Come, O my God, my God!

Fulfil, fulfil my large requires,
Large as infinity!
Give, give me all my soul desires,
All, all that is in Thee! (p. 298.)

THE MINUTES OF HIS FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD CONFERENCES.

17. On Monday, June 25, 1744, our first conference began; six clergymen and all our preachers being present. The next morning we seriously considered the doctrine of sanctification, or perfection. The questions asked concerning it, and the substance of the answers given were as follows: —

"*What is it to be sanctified?*

"To be renewed in the image of God, 'in righteousness and true holiness.'

"*What is implied in being a perfect Christian?*

"The loving God with all our heart, and mind, and soul (Deut. vi. 5).

"*Does this imply, that all inward sin is taken away?*

"Undoubtedly; or how can we be said to be 'saved from all our uncleannesses?' (Ezek. xxxvi. 29)."

Our second conference began August 1, 1745. The next morning we spoke of sanctification as follows: —

"*When does inward sanctification begin?*

"In the moment a man is justified. (Yet sin remains in him, yea, the seed of all sin, till he is sanctified throughout.) From that time a believer gradually dies to sin, and grows in grace.

"*Is this ordinarily given till a little before death?*

"It is not, to those who expect it no sooner.

"*But may we expect it sooner?*

"Why not? For, although we grant, (1.) that the generality of believers, whom we have hitherto known, were not so sanctified till near death; (2.) that few of those to whom St. Paul wrote his Epistles were so at that time; nor, (3.) he himself at the time of writing his former Epistles; yet all this does not prove, that we may not be so to-day.

"*In what manner should we preach sanctification?*

"Scarce at all to those who are not pressing forward; to those who are, always by way of promise: always drawing, rather than driving."

Our third conference began Tuesday, May 26, 1746.

In this we carefully read over the minutes of the two preceding conferences, to observe whether anything contained therein might be retrenched or altered on more mature consideration. But we did not see cause to alter in any respect what we had agreed upon before.

Our fourth conference began on Tuesday, June the 16th,

1747. As several persons were present, who did not believe the doctrine of perfection, we agreed to examine it from the foundation.

In order to this, it was asked,

"*How much is allowed by our brethren who differ from us with regard to entire sanctification?*

"They grant, (1.) That every one must be entirely sanctified in the article of death. (2.) That till then, a believer daily grows in grace, comes nearer and nearer to perfection. (3.) That we ought to be continually pressing after it, and to exhort all others so to do.

"*What do we allow them?*

"We grant, (1.) That many of those who have died in the faith, yea, the greater part of those we have known, were not perfected in love, till a little before their death. (2.) That the term *sanctified*, is continually applied by St. Paul, to all that were justified. (3.) That by this term alone, he rarely, if ever, means, 'saved from all sin.' (4.) That, consequently, it is not proper to use it in that sense, without adding the word *wholly*, *entirely*, or the like. (5.) That the inspired writers almost continually speak of, or to, those who were justified, but very rarely of, or to, those who were wholly sanctified. * (6.) That, consequently, it behooves us to speak almost continually of the state of justification; but more rarely, † 'at least in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification.'

"*What, then, is the point where we divide?*

"It is this: should we expect to be saved from all sin before the article of death?

*That is, unto those alone, exclusive of others; but they speak to them, jointly with others, almost continually.

† More rarely, I allow; but yet in some places, very frequently, strongly, and explicitly.

THE DOCTRINE PROVED FROM THE SCRIPTURES

"*Is there any clear Scripture promise of this,—that God will save us from all sin?*

"There is: 'He shall redeem Israel from all his sins,' Psa. cxxx. 8.

"This is more largely expressed in the prophecy of Ezekiel: 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you; I will also save you from all your uncleannesses,' xxxvi. 25, 29. No promise can be more clear. And to this the Apostle plainly refers in that exhortation: 'Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God,' 2 Cor. vii. 1. Equally clear and express is that ancient promise: "The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,' Deut. xxx. 6.

"*But does any assertion answerable to this, occur in the New Testament?*

"There does, and that laid down in the plainest terms. So 1 John iii. 8: 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil;' the works of the devil, without any limitation or restriction; but all sin is the work of the devil. Parallel to which, is the assertion of St. Paul: 'Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might present it to Himself, a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it might be holy and without blemish,' Eph. v. 25–27.

"And to the same effect is his assertion in the eighth of the Romans, verses 3, 4: 'God sent His Son, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.'

"*Does the New Testament afford any farther ground for expecting to be saved from all sin?*

"Undoubtedly it does; both in those prayers and commands, which are equivalent to the strongest assertions.

"*What prayers do you mean?*

"Prayers for entire sanctification; which, were there no such thing, would be mere mockery of God. Such, in particular, are, (1.) 'Deliver us from evil.' Now, when this is done, when we are delivered from all evil, there can be no sin remaining. (2.) 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one,' John xvii. 20–23. (3.) 'I bow my knees unto the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He would grant you, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge; that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God,' Eph. iii. 14, etc. (4.) 'The very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God, your whole spirit, soul, and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,' 1 Thess. v. 23.

"*What command is there to the same effect?*

"(1.) 'Be ye perfect, as your Father who is in heaven, is perfect,' Matt. v. 48. (2.) 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind,' Matt. xxii. 37. But if the love of God fill all the heart, there can be no sin therein.

"*But how does it appear that this is to be done before the article of death?*

"From the very nature of a command, which is not given to the dead, but to the living. Therefore, 'Thou shalt love

God with all thy heart,' cannot mean 'Thou shalt do this when thou diest,' but, while thou livest.

"(2.) From express texts of Scripture: (i.) 'The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; teaching us that, having renounced ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works,' Titus ii. 11–14. (ii.) 'He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us, to perform the mercy promised to our fathers; the oath which He sware to our father Abraham, that He would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, should serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life,' Luke i. 69, etc.

"*Is there any example in Scripture, of persons who had attained to this?*

"Yes; St. John, and all those of whom he says, 'Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because, as He is, so are we in this world,' 1 John iv. 17.

"*Can you show one such example now? Where is he that is thus perfect?*

"To some that make this inquiry, one might answer, If I knew one here, I would not tell you; for you do not enquire out of love. You are like Herod; you only seek the young child to slay it.

"But more directly we answer: There are many reasons why there should be few, if any, indisputable examples. What inconveniences would this bring on the person himself, set as a mark for all to shoot at! And how unprofitable would it be to gainsayers! 'For if they hear not Moses and the Prophets,' Christ and His Apostles, 'neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.'

"*Are we not apt to have a secret distaste to any who say they are saved from all sin?*

"It is very possible we may, and that upon several grounds; partly from a concern for the good of souls, who may be hurt if these are not what they profess; partly from a kind of implicit envy at those who speak of higher attainments than our own; and partly from our natural slowness and unreadiness of heart to believe the works of God.

"*Why may we not continue in the joy of faith, till we are perfected in love?*

"Why indeed? since holy grief does not quench this joy; since even while we are under the cross, while we deeply partake of the sufferings of Christ, we may rejoice with joy unspeakable."

From these extracts, it undeniably appears, not only what was mine and my brother's judgment, but what was the judgment of all the preachers in connection with us, in the years 1744, 45, 46, and 47. Nor do I remember that, in any one of these conferences, we had one dissenting voice; but whatever doubts any one had when we met, they were all removed before we parted.

Hymns Published in 1749.

In the year 1749, my brother printed two volumes of "Hymns and Sacred Poems." As I did not see these before they were published, there were some things in them which I did not approve of. But I quite approved of the main of the hymns on this head; a few verses of which are subjoined:—

Come, Lord, be manifested here,
  And all the devil's works destroy;
Now, without sin, in me appear,
  And fill with everlasting joy;
Thy beatific face display;
Thy presence is the perfect day. (Vol. i. p. 203.)

Swift to my rescue come,
Thy own this moment seize;
Gather my wand'ring spirit home,
And keep in perfect peace.

Suffer'd no more to rove
O'er all the earth abroad,
Arrest the pris'ner of Thy love,
And shut me up in God! (p. 247.)

Thy pris'ners release, vouchsafe us Thy peace;
And our sorrows and sins in a moment shall cease.
That moment be now! Our petition allow,
Our present Redeemer and Comforter Thou! (Vol. ii. p. 124.

From this inbred sin deliver;
Let the yoke now be broke;
Make me Thine forever.

Partner of Thy perfect nature,
Let me be now in Thee
A new, sinless creature. (p. 156.)

Turn me, Lord, and turn me now,
To Thy yoke my spirit bow;
Grant me now the pearl to find
Of a meek and quiet mind.

Calm, O calm my troubled breast;
Let me gain that second rest;
From my works for ever cease,
Perfected in holiness. (p. 168.)

Come in this accepted hour,
Bring Thy heavenly kingdom in!
Fill us with the glorious power,
Rooting out the seeds of sin. (p. 162.)

Come, Thou dear Lamb, for sinners slain,
Bring in the cleansing flood:
Apply, to wash out every stain,
Thine efficacious blood.

O let it sink into our soul
Deep as the inbred sin;
Make every wounded spirit whole,
And every leper clean! (p. 171.)

Pris'ners of hope, arise,
And see your Lord appear;
Lo! on the wings of love he flies,
And brings redemption near.

Redemption in His blood
He calls you to receive;
"Come unto Me, the pard'ning God;
Believe," He cries, "believe!"

Jesus, to Thee we look,
Till saved from sin's remains,
Reject the inbred tyrant's yoke,
And cast away his chains.

Our nature shall no more
O'er us dominion have;
By faith we apprehend the power,
Which shall for ever save. (p. 188.)

Jesus, our life, in us appear,
Who daily die Thy death;
Reveal Thyself the finisher;
Thy quick'ning Spirit breathe!

Unfold the hidden mystery,
The second gift impart;
Reveal Thy glorious self in me,
In every waiting heart. (p. 195.)

In Him we have peace, In Him we have power!
Preserved by His grace Throughout the dark hour
In all our temptations He keeps us, to prove
His utmost salvation, His fulness of love.

Pronounce the glad word, And bid us be free!
Ah, hast Thou not, Lord, A blessing for me?
The peace Thou hast given, This moment impart,
And open Thy heaven, O Love, in my heart! (p. 324.)

A second edition of these hymns was published in the year 1752; and that without any other alteration, than that of a few literal mistakes.

I have been the more large in these extracts, because, hence, it appears, beyond all possibility of exception, that to this day, both my brother and I maintained, (1.) That Christian perfection is that love of God and our neighbor, which implies deliverance from all sin. (2.) That this is received merely by faith. (3.) That it is given instantaneously, in one moment. (4.) That we are to expect it, not at death, but every moment; that now is the accepted time, now is the day of this salvation.

"THOUGHTS ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION," PUBLISHED IN 1759.

19. At the conference in the 1759, perceiving some danger that a diversity of sentiments should insensibly steal in among us, we again largely considered this doctrine; and soon after I published "Thoughts on Christian Perfection," prefaced with the following advertisement: —

"The following tract is by no means designed to gratify the curiosity of any man. It is not intended to prove the doctrine at large, in opposition to those who explode and ridicule it; no, nor to answer the numerous objections against it, which may be raised, even by serious men. All I intend here, is, simply to declare what are my sentiments on this head; what Christian perfection does, according to my apprehension, include, and what it does not; and to add a few practical observations and directions relative to the subject.

"As these thoughts were at first thrown together, by way of question and answer, I let them continue in the same form. They are just the same that I have entertained for above twenty years.

"*What is Christian perfection?*

"The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and

strength. This implies, that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions, are governed by pure love.

"*Do you affirm that this perfection excludes all infirmities, ignorance, and mistake?*

"I continually affirm quite the contrary, and always have done so.

"*But how can every thought, word, and work, be governed by pure love, and the man be subject, at the same time, to ignorance and mistake?*

"I see no contradiction here: 'A man may be filled with pure love, and still be liable to mistake.' Indeed, I do not expect to be freed from actual mistakes, till this mortal puts on immortality. I believe this to be a natural consequence of the soul's dwelling in flesh and blood. For we cannot now think at all, but by the mediation of those bodily organs which have suffered equally with the rest of our frame. And hence we cannot avoid sometimes thinking wrong, till this corruptible shall have put on incorruption.

"But we may carry this thought farther yet. A mistake in judgment may possibly occasion a mistake in practice. For instance: Mr. De Renty's mistake touching the nature of mortification, arising from prejudice of education, occasioned that practical mistake, his wearing an iron girdle. And a thousand such instances there may be, even in those who are in the highest state of grace. Yet, where every word and action springs from love, such a mistake is not openly a sin. However, it cannot bear the rigor of God's justice, but needs the atoning blood.

"*What was the judgment of all our brethren who met at Bristol in August,* 1758, *on this head?*

"It was expressed in these words: (1.) Every one may mistake as long as he lives. (2.) A mistake in opinion may

occasion a mistake in practice. (3.) Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law. Therefore, (4.) Every such mistake, were it not for the blood of atonement, would expose to eternal damnation. (5.) It follows, that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their actual transgressions, and may say for themselves, as well as for their brethren, 'Forgive us our trespasses.'

"This easily accounts for what might otherwise seem to be utterly unaccountable; namely, that those who are not offended when we speak of the highest degree of love, yet will not hear of living without sin. The reason is, they know all men are liable to mistake, and that in practice as well as in judgment. But they do not know, or do not observe, that this is not sin, if love is the sole principle of action.

"*But still, if they live without sin, does not this exclude the necessity of a Mediator? At least, is it not plain that they stand no longer in need of Christ in His priestly office?*

"Far from it. None feel their need of Christ like these; none so entirely depend upon Him. For Christ does not give life to the soul separate from, but in and with, Himself. Hence His words are equally true of all men, in whatsoever state of grace they are: 'As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me: without' (or separate from) 'me ye can do nothing.'

Those Entirely Sanctified Need the Atonement.

"In every state we need Christ in the following respects, (1.) Whatever grace we receive, it is a free gift from Him. (2.) We receive it as His purchase, merely in consideration of the price He paid. (3.) We have this grace, not only from Christ, but in Him. For our perfection is not like that of

a tree, which flourishes by the sap derived from its own root, but, as was said before, like that of a branch which, united to the vine, bears fruit; but, severed from it, is dried up and withered. (4.) All our blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, depend on His intercession for us, which is one branch of His priestly office, whereof therefore we have always equal need. (5.) The best of men still need Christ in His priestly office, to atone for their omissions, their short-comings (as some not improperly speak), their mistakes in judgment and practice, and their defects of various kinds. For these are all deviations from the perfect law, and consequently need an atonement. Yet that they are not properly sins, we apprehend may appear from the words of St. Paul, 'He that loveth, hath fulfilled the law; for love is the fulfilling of the law,' Rom. xiii. 10. Now, mistakes, and whatever infirmities necessarily flow from the corruptible state of the body, are no way contrary to love; nor therefore, in the Scripture sense, sin.

Involuntary Transgressions and Sinless Perfection.

To explain myself a little farther on this head: (1.) Not only sin, properly so called (that is, a voluntary transgression of a known law), but sin, improperly so called (that is, an involuntary transgression of a Divine law, known or unknown), needs atoning blood. (2.) I believe there is no such perfection in this life as excludes these involuntary transgressions which I apprehend to be naturally consequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable from mortality. (3.) Therefore *sinless perfection* is a phrase I never use, lest I should seem to contradict myself. (4.) I believe, a person filled with the love of God is still liable to these involuntary transgressions. (5.) Such transgressions you may call sins, if you please: I do not, for the reasons above mentioned.

"*What advice would you give to those that do, and those that do not, call them so?*

"Let those that do not call them sins, never think that themselves or any other persons are in such a state as that they can stand before infinite justice without a Mediator. This must argue either the deepest ignorance, or the highest arrogance and presumption.

"Let those who do call them so, beware how they confound these defects with sins, properly so called.

"But how will they avoid it? How will these be distinguished from those, if they are all promiscuously called sins? I am much afraid, if we should allow any sins to be consistent with perfection, few would confine the idea to those defects concerning which only the assertion could be true.

"*But how can a liableness to mistake consist with perfect love? Is not a person who is perfected in love every moment under its influence? And can any mistake flow from pure love?*

"I answer, (1.) Many mistakes may consist with pure love; (2.) Some may accidentally flow from it: I mean, love itself may incline us to mistake. The pure love of our neighbor, springing from the love of God, thinketh no evil, believeth and hopeth all things. Now, this very temper, unsuspicious, ready to believe and hope the best of all men, may occasion our thinking some men better than they really are. Here then is a manifest mistake, accidentally flowing from pure love.

"*How shall we avoid setting perfection too high or too low?*

"By keeping to the Bible, and setting it just as high as the Scripture does. It is nothing higher and nothing lower than this, — the pure love of God and man; the loving God

with all our heart and soul, and our neighbor as ourselves. It is love governing the heart and life, running though all our tempers, words, and actions.

On Professing Holiness.

"Suppose one had attained to this, would you advise him to speak of it?

At first perhaps he would scarce be able to refrain, the fire would be so hot within him; his desire to declare the loving-kindness of the Lord carrying him away like a torrent. But afterward he might; and then it would be advisable, not to speak of it to them that know not God (it is most likely, it would only provoke them to contradict and blaspheme); nor to others, without some particular reason, without some good in view. And then he should have especial care to avoid all appearance of boasting; to speak with the deepest humility and reverence, giving all the glory to God.

"But would it not be better to be entirely silent, not to speak of it at all?

"By silence, he might avoid many crosses, which will naturally and necessarily ensue, if he simply declare, even among believers, what God has wrought in his soul. If, therefore, such a one were to confer with flesh and blood, he would be entirely silent. But this could not be done with a clear conscience: for undoubtedly he ought to speak. Men do not light a candle to put under a bushel; much less does the all-wise God. He does not raise such a monument of his power and love, to hide it from all mankind. Rather, he intends it as a general blessing to those who are simple of heart. He designs thereby, not barely the happiness of that individual person, but the animating and encouraging others to follow after the same blessing. His will is, 'that many shall see it' and rejoice, 'and put their trust in the

Lord.' Nor does anything under heaven more quicken the desires of those who are justified, than to converse with those whom they believe to have experienced a still higher salvation. This places that salvation full in their view, and increases their hunger and thirst after it; an advantage which must have been entirely lost, had the person so saved buried himself in silence.

"*But is there no way to prevent these crosses which usually fall on those who speak of being thus saved?*

"It seems they cannot be prevented altogether, while so much of nature remains even in believers. But something might be done, if the preacher in every place would, (1.) Talk freely with all who speak thus; and, (2.) Labor to prevent the unjust or unkind treatment of those in favor of whom there is reasonable proof.

The Evidences of Being Entirely Sanctified.

"*What is reasonable proof? How may we certainly know one that is saved from all sin?*

"We cannot infallibly know one that is thus saved (nor even one that is justified), unless it should please God to endow us with the miraculous discernment of spirits. But we apprehend those would be sufficient proofs to any reasonable man, and such as would leave little room to doubt either the truth or depth of the work: (1.) If we had clear evidence of his exemplary behaviour for some time before this supposed change. This would give us reason to believe, he would not 'lie for God,' but speak neither more nor less than he felt; (2.) If he gave a distinct account of the time and manner wherein the change was wrought, with sound speech which could not be reproved; and, (3.) If it appeared that all his subsequent words and actions were holy and unblamable.

"The short of the matter is this: (1.) I have abundant reason to believe this person will not lie; (2.) He testifies before God, 'I feel no sin, but all love; I pray, rejoice, and give thanks without ceasing; and I have as clear an inward witness, that I am fully renewed, as that I am justified.' Now, if I have nothing to oppose to this plain testimony, I ought in reason to believe it.

"It avails nothing to object, 'But I know several things wherein he is quite mistaken.' For it has been allowed, that all who are in the body are liable to mistake; and that a mistake in judgment may sometimes occasion a mistake in practice; though great care is to be taken that no ill use be made of this concession. For instance: Even one that is perfected in love may mistake with regard to another person, and may think him, in a particular case, to be more or less faulty than he really is. And hence he may speak to him with more or less severity than the truth requires. And in this sense (though that be not the primary meaning of St. James), 'in many things we offend all.' This, therefore, is no proof at all, that the person so speaking is not perfect.

"But is it not a proof, if he is surprised or fluttered by a noise, a fall, or some sudden danger?

"It is not; for one may start, tremble, change color, or be otherwise disordered in body, while the soul is calmly stayed on God, and remains in perfect peace. Nay, the mind itself may be deeply distressed, may be exceeding sorrowful, may be perplexed and pressed down by heaviness and anguish, even to agony, while the heart cleaves to God by perfect love, and the will is wholly resigned to Him. Was it not so with the Son of God Himself? Does any child of man endure the distress, the anguish, the agony which He sustained? And yet He knew no sin.

"But can any one who has a pure heart prefer pleasing to unpleasing food; or use any pleasure of sense which is not strictly necessary? If so, how do they differ from others?

"The difference between these and others in taking pleasant food is, (1.) They need none of those things to make them happy; for they have a spring of happiness within. They see and love God. Hence they rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks. (2.) They may use them, but they do not seek them. (3.) They use them sparingly, and not for the sake of the thing itself. This being premised, we answer directly,—'Such a one may use pleasing food without the danger which attends those who are not saved from sin. He may prefer it to an unpleasing, though equally wholesome food, as a means of increasing thankfulness, with a single eye to God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy. On the same principle, he may smell to a flower, or eat a bunch of grapes, or take any other pleasure which does not lessen but increase his delight in God. Therefore, neither can we say that one perfected in love would be incapable of marriage, and of worldly business; if he were called thereto, he would be more capable than ever; as being able to do all things without hurry or carefulness, without any distraction of spirit.

"But if two perfect Christians had children, how could they be born in sin, since there was none in the parents?

It is a possible, but not a probable case. I doubt whether it ever was or ever will be. But waiving this, I answer, 'Sin is entailed upon me, not by immediate generation, but by my first parent.' 'In Adam all died; by the disobedience of one, all men were made sinners;' all men, without exception, who were in his loins when he ate the forbidden fruit.

"We have a remarkable case of this in gardening; grafts

on a crab stalk bear excellent fruit; but sow the kernels of this fruit, and what will be the event? They produce as mere crabs as ever were eaten.

THE OUTWARD LIFE OF THE REGENERATE AND ENTIRELY SANCTIFIED THE SAME.

"But what does the perfect one do more than others? more than the common believers?

"Perhaps nothing; so may the providence of God have hedged him in by outward circumstances. Perhaps not so much; though he desires and longs to spend and be spent for God; at least, not externally: he neither speaks so many words, nor does so many works. As neither did our Lord Himself speak so many words, or do so many, no, nor so great works, as some of His apostles, John xiv. 12. But what then? This is no proof that he has not more grace; and by this God measures the outward work. Hear ye Him: 'Verily, I say unto you, this poor widow has cast in more than them all.' Verily, this poor man, with his few broken words, hath spoken more than them all. Verily, this poor woman, that hath given a cup of cold water, hath done more than them all. Oh, cease to 'judge according to appearance,' and learn to 'judge righteous judgment!'

"But is not this a proof against him,—I feel no power either in his words or prayer?

"It is not: for perhaps that is your own fault. You are not likely to feel any power therein, if any of these hindrances lie in the way: (1.) Your own deadness of soul. The dead Pharisees felt no power even in His words who 'spake as never man spake.' (2.) The guilt of some unrepented sin lying upon the conscience. (3.) Prejudice toward him of any kind. (4.) Your not believing that state to be attainable wherein he professes to be. (5.) Unreadi-

ness to think or own he has attained it. (6.) Overvaluing or idolizing him. (7.) Overvaluing yourself and your own judgment. If any of these is the case, what wonder is it that you feel no power in anything he says? But do not others feel it? If they do, your argument falls to the ground. And if they do not, do none of these hindrances lie in their way too? You must be certain of this before you can build any argument thereon; and even then your argument will prove no more than that grace and gifts do not always go together.

"'But he does not come up to my idea of a perfect Christian.' And perhaps no one ever did, or ever will. For your idea may go beyond, or at least beside the Scriptural account. It may include more than the Bible includes therein, or, however, something which that does not include. Scripture perfection is, pure love filling the heart, and governing all the words and actions. If your idea includes anything more or anything else, it is not Scriptural; and then no wonder, that a Scripturally perfect Christian does not come up to it.

"I fear many stumble on this stumbling-block. They include as many ingredients as they please not according to Scripture but their own imagination, in their idea of one that is perfect; and then readily deny anyone to be such who does not answer that imaginary idea.

"The more care should we take to keep the simple, Scriptural account continually in our eye. Pure love reigning alone in the heart and life, — this is the whole of Scriptural perfection.

The Spirit Witnesses to our Sanctification as Clearly as He does to our Justification.

"*When may a person judge himself to have attained this?*

"When, after having been convinced of inbred sin, by a

far deeper and clearer conviction than that he experienced before justification, and after having experienced a gradual mortification of it, he experiences a total death to sin, and an entire renewal in the love and image of God, so as to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks. Not that 'to feel all love and no sin' is a sufficient proof. Several have experienced this for a time before their souls were fully renewed. None, therefore, ought to believe that the work is done, till there is added the testimony of the Spirit, witnessing his entire sanctification, as clearly as his justification.

We may be Deceived.

"But whence is it, that some imagine they are thus sanctified, when in reality they are not?

It is hence; they do not judge by all the preceding marks, but either by part of them, or by others that are ambiguous. But I know no instance of a person attending to them all, and yet deceived in this matter. I believe there can be none in the world. If a man be deeply and fully convinced, after justification, of inbred sin; if he then experience a gradual mortification of sin, and afterward, an entire renewal in the image of God; if to this change, immensely greater than that wrought when he was justified, be added a clear, direct witness of the renewal; I judge it as impossible this man should be deceived herein, as that God should lie. And if one whom I know to be a man of veracity, testify these things to me, I ought not, without some sufficient reason, to reject his testimony.

Gradual or Instantaneous?

"Is this death to sin, and renewal in love, gradual or instantaneous?

"A man may be dying for some time; yet he does not,

properly speaking, die, till the soul is separated from the body; and in that instant, he lives the life of eternity. In like manner, he may be dying to sin for some time; yet he is not dead to sin, till sin is separated from his soul; and in that instant, he lives the full life of love. And as the change undergone, when the body dies, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any we had known before, yea, such as till then, it is impossible to conceive; so the change wrought, when the soul dies to sin, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any before, and than any can conceive, till he experiences it. Yet he still grows in grace, in the knowledge of Christ, in the love and image of God; and will do so, not only till death, but to all eternity.

"*How are we to wait for this change?*

"Not in careless indifference, or indolent inactivity; but in vigorous, universal obedience, in a zealous keeping of all the commandments, in watchfulness and painfulness, in denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily; as well as in earnest prayer and fasting, and a close attendance on all the ordinances of God. And if any man dream of attaining it any other way (yea, or of keeping it when it is attained, when he has received it even in the largest measure), he deceiveth his own soul. It is true, we receive it by simple faith; but God does not, will not, give that faith, unless we seek it with all diligence, in the way which He hath ordained.

"This consideration may satisfy those who enquire, why so few have received the blessing. Enquire how many are seeking it in this way; and you have a sufficient answer.

"Prayer especially is wanting. Who continues instant therein? Who wrestles with God for this very thing? So, 'ye have not, because ye ask not; or because ye ask amiss,' namely, that you may be renewed before you die.

Before you die! Will that content you? Nay, but ask that it may be done now; to-day, while it is called to-day. Do not call this 'setting God a time.' Certainly, to-day is His time, as well as to-morrow. Make haste, man, make haste! Let

> Thy soul break out in strong desire
> The perfect bliss to prove;
> Thy longing heart be all on fire
> To be dissolved in love!

"But may we not continue in peace and joy, till we are perfected in love?

"Certainly we may; for the kingdom of God is not divided against itself; therefore, let not believers be discouraged from 'rejoicing in the Lord always.' And yet we may be sensibly pained at the sinful nature that still remains in us. It is good for us to have a piercing sense of this, and a vehement desire to be delivered from it. But this should only incite us the more zealously to fly every moment to our strong Helper, the more earnestly to 'press forward to the mark, the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. And when the sense of our sin most abounds, the sense of His love should much more abound.

How to Treat Those who Profess Holiness.

"How should we treat those who think they have attained?

"Examine them candidly, and exhort them to pray fervently, that God would show them all that is in their hearts. The most earnest exhortations to abound in every grace, and the strongest cautions to avoid all evil, are given throughout the New Testament, to those who are in the highest state of grace. But this should be done with the utmost tenderness; and without any harshness, sternness, or sourness. We should carefully avoid the very appearance of anger, unkindness, or contempt. Leave it to Satan thus to tempt, and to

his children to cry out, 'Let us examine him with despitefulness and torture, that we may know his meekness, and prove his patience.' If they are faithful to the grace given, they are in no danger of perishing thereby; no, not if they remain in that mistake till their spirit is returning to God.

"*But what hurt can it do to deal harshly with them?*

"Either they are mistaken, or they are not. If they are, it may destroy their souls. This is nothing impossible, no, nor improbable. It may so enrage or so discourage them, that they will sink and rise no more. If they are not mistaken, it may grieve those whom God has not grieved, and do much hurt unto our own souls. For, undoubtedly, he that toucheth them, toucheth, as it were, the apple of God's eye. If they are indeed, full of His Spirit, to behave unkindly or contemptuously to them, is doing no little despite to the Spirit of grace. Hereby, likewise, we feed and increase in ourselves evil surmising, and many wrong tempers. To instance only in one: What self-sufficiency is this, to set ourselves up for inquisitors-general, for peremptory judges in these deep things of God! Are we qualified for the office? Can we pronounce, in all cases, how far infirmity reaches? what may, and what may not, be resolved into it? what may, in all circumstances, and what may not, consist with perfect love? Can we precisely determine, how it will influence the look, the gesture, the tone of the voice? If we can, doubtless we are 'the men, and wisdom shall die with us.'

"*But if they are displeased at our not believing them, is not this a full proof against them?*

"According as that displeasure is. If they are angry, it is a proof against them; if they are grieved, it is not. They ought to be grieved, if we disbelieve a real work of God, and thereby deprive ourselves of the advantage we might

nave received from it. And we may easily mistake this grief for anger, as the outward expressions of both are much alike.

"*But is it not well to find out those who fancy they have attained, when they have not?*

"It is well to do it by mild, loving examination. But it is not well to triumph even over these. It is extremely wrong, if we find such an instance, to rejoice as if we had found great spoils. Ought we not rather to grieve, to be deeply concerned, to let our eyes run down with tears? Here is one who seemed to be a living proof of God's power to save to the uttermost; but, alas! it is not as we hoped. He is weighed in the balance, and found wanting! And is this matter of joy? Ought we not to rejoice a thousand times more, if we can find nothing but pure love?

"'But he is deceived.' What then? It is a harmless mistake, while he feels nothing but love in his heart. It is a mistake which generally argues great grace, a high degree both of holiness and happiness. This should be a matter of real joy to all that are simple of heart; not the mistake itself, but the height of grace which for a time occasions it. I rejoice that this soul is always happy in Christ, always full of prayer and thanksgiving. I rejoice that he feels no unholy temper, but the pure love of God continually. And I will rejoice, if sin is suspended till it is totally destroyed.

"*Is there no danger then in a man's being thus deceived?*

"Not at the time that he feels no sin. There was danger before, and there will be again when he comes into fresh trials. But so long as he feels nothing but love animating all his thoughts, and words, and actions, he is in no danger; he is not only happy, but safe, 'under the shadow of the Almighty;' and, for God's sake, let him continue in that love as long as he can. Meantime, you may do well to warn

him of the danger that will be, if his love grow cold and sin revive; even the danger of casting away hope, and supposing, that because he hath not attained yet, therefore he never shall.

"*But what, if none have attained it yet? What, if all who think so are deceived?*

"Convince me of this, and I will preach it more. But understand me right; I do not build any doctrine on this or that person. This or any other man may be deceived, and I am not moved. But, if there are none made perfect yet, God has not sent me to preach perfection.

"Put a parallel case. For many years I have preached, 'There is a peace of God which passeth all understanding.' Convince me that this word has fallen to the ground; that in all these years none have attained this peace; that there is no living witness of it at this day; and I will preach it no more.

" 'Oh, but several persons have died in that peace.' Perhaps so; but I want living witnesses. I cannot, indeed, be infallibly certain that this or that person is a witness; but if I were certain there are none such, I must have done with this doctrine.

" 'You misunderstand me. I believe some who died in this love, enjoyed it long before their death. But I was not certain that their former testimony was true till some hours before they died.'

"You had not an infallible certainty then: and a reason able certainty you might have had before; such a certainty as as might have quickened and comforted your own soul, and answered all other Christian purposes. Such a certainty as this any candid person may have, suppose there be any living witness, by talking one hour with that person in the and fear of God.

"But what does it signify whether any have attained it or so, seeing so many scriptures witness for it?

"If I were convinced that none in England had attained what has been so clearly and strongly preached by such a number of preachers, in so many places, and for so long a time, I should be clearly convinced that we had all mistaken the meaning of those Scriptures; and, therefore, for the time to come, I too must teach that 'sin will remain till death.'"

FANATICISM WAS MANIFEST IN LONDON IN 1762.

20. In the year 1762, there was a great increase of the work of God in London. Many, who had hitherto cared for none of these things, were deeply convinced of their lost estate; many found redemption in the blood of Christ; not a few backsliders were healed; and a considerable number of persons believed that God had saved them from all sin. Easily foreseeing that Satan would be endeavoring to sow tares among the wheat, I took much pains to apprize them of the danger, particularly with regard to pride and enthusiasm. And while I stayed in town, I had reason to hope they continued both humble and sober-minded. But almost as soon as I was gone, enthusiasm broke in. Two or three began to take their own imaginations for impressions from God, and thence to suppose that they should never die; and these, laboring to bring others into the same opinion, occasioned much noise and confusion. Soon after, the same persons, with a few more, ran into other extravagances; fancying they could not be tempted; that they should feel no more pain; and that they had the gift of prophecy, and of discerning of spirits. At my return to London, in autumn, some of them stood reproved; but others were got above instruction. Meantime, a flood of reproach came upon me almost from every quarter; from themselves, because I was

checking them on all occasions; and from others, because they said, I did not check them. However, the hand of the Lord was not stayed, but more and more sinners were convinced; while some were almost daily converted to God, and others enabled to love him with all their heart.

21. About this time, a friend at some distance from London wrote to me as follows:—

"Be not over alarmed that Satan sows tares among the wheat of Christ. It ever has been so, especially on any remarkable outpouring of His Spirit; and ever will be so, till he is chained up for a thousand years. Till then he will always ape, and endeavor to counteract, the work of the Spirit of Christ.

"One melancholy effect of this has been, that a world who is always asleep in the arms of the evil one, has ridiculed every work of the Holy Spirit.

"But what can real Christians do? Why, if they would act worthy of themselves, they should, (1.) Pray that every deluded soul may be delivered; (2.) Endeavor to reclaim them in the spirit of meekness; and, lastly, take the utmost care, both by prayer and watchfulness, that the delusion of others may not lessen their zeal in seeking after that universal holiness of soul, body, and spirit, 'without which no man shall see the Lord.'

"Indeed, this complete new creature is mere madness to a mad world. But it is, notwithstanding, the will and wisdom of God. May we all seek after it!

"But some who maintain this doctrine in its full extent are too often guilty of limiting the Almighty. He dispenses His gifts just as He pleases; therefore, it is neither wise nor modest to affirm that a person must be a believer for any length of time before he is capable of receiving a a high degree of the Spirit of holiness.

"God's usual method is one thing, but His sovereign pleas-

ure is another. He has wise reasons both for hastening and retarding His work. Sometimes He comes suddenly, and unexpected; sometimes, not till we have long looked for Him.

"Indeed, it has been my opinion for many years, that one great cause why men make so little improvement in the Divine life is their own coldness, negligence, and unbelief. And yet I here speak of believers.

"May the Spirit of Christ give us a right judgment in all things, and 'fill us with all the fulness of God;' that so we may be 'perfect and entire, wanting nothing.' Amen

22. About the same time, five or six honest enthusiasts foretold the world was to end on the 28th of February. I immediately withstood them, by every possible means, both in public and private. I preached expressly upon the subject, both at West Street and Spitalfields. I warned the society, again and again, and spoke severally to as many as I could; and I saw the fruit of my labor. They made exceeding few converts. I believe scarce thirty in our whole society. Nevertheless, they made abundance of noise, gave huge occasion of offense to those who took care to improve to the uttermost every occasion against me, and greatly increased both the number and courage of those who opposed Christian perfection.

Queries to Those who Deny Perfection Attainable in this Life.

23. Some questions now published by one of these, induced a plain man to write the following —

"Queries, humbly proposed to those who deny perfection to be attainable in this life.

"(1.) Has there not been a larger measure of the Holy Spirit given under the Gospel, than under the Jewish dis-

pensation? If not, in what sense was the Spirit not given before Christ was glorified? John vii. 39.

"(2.) Was that 'glory which followed the sufferings of Christ,' 1 Peter i. 11, an external glory, or an internal, viz., the glory of holiness?

"(3.) Has God anywhere in Scripture commanded us more than He has promised to us?

"(4.) Are the promises of God respecting holiness to be fulfilled in this life, or only in the next?

"(5.) Is a Christian under any other laws than those which God promises to 'write in our hearts'? Jer. xxxi. 31, etc.; Heb. viii. 10.

"(6.) In what sense is 'the righteousness of the law fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit'? Rom. viii. 4.

"(7.) Is it impossible for any one in this life to 'love God with all his heart, and mind, and soul, and strength'? And is the Christian under any law which is not fulfilled in this love?

"(8.) Does the soul's going out of the body effect its purification from indwelling sin?

"(9.) If so, is it not something else, not 'the blood of Christ, which cleanseth' it 'from all sin'?

"(10.) If His blood cleanseth us from all sin, while the soul and body are united, is it not in this life?

"(11.) If when that union ceases, is it not in the next? And is not this too late?

"(12.) If in the article of death; what situation is the soul in, when it is neither in the body nor out of it?

"(13.) Has Christ anywhere taught us to pray for what He never designs to give?

"(14.) Has He not taught us to pray, 'Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven?' And is it not done perfectly in heaven?

"(15.) If so, has He not taught us to pray for perfection on earth? Does He not then design to give it?

"(16.) Did not St. Paul pray according to the will of God, when he prayed that the Thessalonians might be 'sanctified wholly, and preserved' (in this world, not the next, unless he was praying for the dead) 'blameless in body, soul, and spirit, unto the coming of Jesus Christ?'

"(17.) Do you sincerely desire to be freed from indwelling sin in this life?

"(18.) If you do, did not God give you that desire?

"(19.) If so, did He not give it you to mock you, since it is impossible it should ever be fulfilled?

"(20.) If you have not sincerity enough even to desire it, are you not disputing about matters too high for you?

"(21.) Do you ever pray God to 'cleanse the thoughts of your heart, that you 'may perfectly love Him?'

"(22.) If you neither desire what you ask, nor believe it attainable, pray you not as a fool prayeth?

"God help thee to consider these questions calmly and impartially!"

Some Witnesses.

24. In the latter end of this year, God called to Himself that burning and shining light, Jane Cooper. As she was both a living and a dying witness of Christian perfection, it will not be at all foreign to the subject to add a short account of her death, with one of her own letters, containing a plain and artless relation of the manner wherein it pleased God to work that great change in her soul: —

May 2, 1761.

"I believe, while memory remains in me, gratitude will continue. From the time you preached on Gal. v. 5, I saw clearly the true state of my soul. That sermon described my heart, and what it wanted to be; namely, truly happy

You read Mr. M——'s letter, and it described the religion which I desired. From that time the prize appeared in view, and I was enabled to follow hard after it. I was kept watching unto prayer, sometimes in much distress, at other times in patient expectation of the blessing. For some days before you left London, my soul was stayed on a promise I had applied to me in prayer: 'The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple.' I believed He would, and that He would sit there as a refiner's fire. The Tuesday after you went, I thought I could not sleep unless He fulfilled His word that night. I never knew, as I did then, the force of these words: 'Be still, and know that I am God.' I became nothing before Him, and enjoyed perfect calmness in my soul. I knew not whether He had destroyed my sin; but I desired to know, that I might praise Him. Yet I soon found the return of unbelief, and groaned, being burdened. On Wednesday, I went to London, and sought the Lord without ceasing. I promised, if He would save me from sin, I would praise Him. I could part with all things, so I might win Christ. But I found all these pleas to be nothing worth; and that if He saved me, it must be freely, for His own name's sake. On Thursday, I was so much tempted that I thought of destroying myself, or never conversing more with the people of God; and yet I had no doubt of His pardoning love; but, —

> 'Twas worse than death my God to love,
> And not my God alone.'

On Friday, my distress was deepened. I endeavored to pray, and could not. I went to Mrs. D., who prayed for me, and told me it was the death of nature. I opened the Bible on, 'The fearful and unbelieving shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.' I could not bear it. I opened again, on Mark xvi. 6, 7: 'Be not

affrighted; ye seek Jesus of Nazareth. Go your way; tell His disciples He goeth before you into Galilee; there ye shall see Him.' I was encouraged, and enabled to pray, believing I should see Jesus at home. I returned that night, and found Mrs. G. She prayed for me; and the predestinarian had no plea but, 'Lord, thou art no respecter of persons.' He proved He was not, by blessing me. I was in a moment enabled to lay hold on Jesus Christ, and found salvation by simple faith. He assured me, the Lord, the King, was in the midst of me, and that I should see evil no more. I now blessed Him who had visited and redeemed me, and was become my 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.' I saw Jesus altogether lovely; and knew He was mine in all His offices. And, glory be to Him, He now reigns in my heart without a rival. I find no will but His. I feel no pride; nor any affection but what is placed on Him. I know it is by faith I stand; and that watching unto prayer must be the guard of faith. I am happy in God this moment, and I believe for the next. I have often read the chapter you mention (1 Cor. xiii.), and compared my heart and life with it. In so doing, I feel my shortcomings, and the need I have of the atoning blood. Yet I dare not say I do not feel a measure of the love there described, though I am not all I shall be. I desire to be lost in that 'love which passeth knowledge.' I see 'the just shall live by faith'; and unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given. If I were an archangel, I should veil my face before Him, and let silence speak His praise!"

The following account was given by one who was an eye and ear witness of what she relates: —

"(1.) In the beginning of November, she seemed to have a foresight of what was coming upon her, and used frequently to sing these words: —

'When pain o'er this weak flesh prevails,
With lamb-like patience arm my breast.'

And when she sent to me, to let me know she was ill, she wrote in her note, 'I suffer the will of Jesus; all He sends is sweetened by His love. I am as happy as if I heard a voice say: —

'For me my elder brethren stay,
And angels beckon me away,
And Jesus bids me come!'

"(2.) Upon my telling her, 'I cannot choose life or death for you,' she said, 'I asked the Lord, that, if it was His will, I might die first. And He told me, you should survive me, and that you should close my eyes.' When we perceived it was the small-pox, I said to her, 'My dear, you will not be frightened if we tell you what is your distemper.' She said, 'I cannot be frighted at His will.'

"(3.) The distemper was soon very heavy upon her; but so much the more was her faith strengthened. Tuesday, November 16, she said to me, 'I have been worshipping before the throne in a glorious manner; my soul was so let into God!' I said, 'Did the Lord give you any particular promise?' 'No,' replied she; 'it was all

'That sacred awe that dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love.'

"(4.) On Thursday, upon my asking, 'What have you to say to me?' she said, 'Nay, nothing but what you know already: God is love.' I asked, 'Have you any particular promise?' She replied, 'I do not seem to want any; I can live without. I shall die a lump of deformity, but shall meet you all glorious: and meantime, I shall still have fellowship with your spirit.'

"(5.) Mr. M. asked, what she thought the most excellent

way to walk in, and what were its chief hindrances. She answered: 'The greatest hindrance is generally from the natural constitution. It was mine to be reserved, to be very quiet, to suffer much, and to say little. Some may think one way more excellent, and some another: but the thing is to live in the will of God. For some months past, when I have been particularly devoted to this, I have felt such a guidance of His Spirit, and the unction which I have received from the Holy One has so taught me of all things, that I needed not any man should teach me, save as this anointing teacheth.'

"(6.) On Friday morning she said, 'I believe I shall die.' She then sat up in her bed and said, 'Lord, I bless Thee, that Thou art ever with me, and all Thou hast is mine. Thy love is greater than my weakness, greater than my helplessness, greater than my unworthiness. Lord, Thou sayest *to corruption, Thou art my sister!* And glory be to Thee, O Jesus, Thou art my brother. Let me comprehend, with all saints, the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of Thy love! Bless these' (some that were present); 'let them be every moment exercised in all things as Thou wouldest have them to be.'

"(7.) Some hours after, it seemed as if the agonies of death were just coming upon her; but her face was full of smiles of triumph, and she clapped her hands for joy. Mrs. C. said, 'My dear, you are more than conqueror through the blood of the Lamb.' She answered, 'Yes, O yes, sweet Jesus! O death, where is thy sting?' She then lay as in a doze for some time. Afterward, she strove to speak, but could not; however, she testified her love by shaking hands with all in the room.

"(8.) Mr. W. then came. She said, 'Sir, I did not know that I should live to see you. But I am glad the Lord has

given me this opportunity, and likewise power to speak to you. I love you. You have always preached the strictest doctrine; and I loved to follow it. Do so still, whoever is pleased or displeased,' He asked, 'Do you now believe you are saved from sin?' She said, 'Yes; I have had no doubt of it for many months. That I ever had, was, because I did not abide in the faith. I now feel I have kept the faith; and perfect love casteth out all fear. As to you, the Lord promised me, your latter works should exceed your former, though I do not live to see it. I have been a great enthusiast, as they term it, these six months; but never lived so near the heart of Christ in my life. You, sir, desire to comfort the hearts of hundreds by following that simplicity your soul loves.'

"(9.) To one who had received the love of God under her prayer, she said, 'I feel I have not followed a cunningly devised fable; for I am as happy as I can live. Do you press on, and stop not short of the mark.' To Miss M——s she said, 'Love Christ; He loves you. I believe I shall see you at the right hand of God: But *as one star differs from another star in glory, so shall it be in the resurrection.* I charge you, in the presence of God, meet me in that day all glorious within. Avoid all conformity to the world. You are robbed of many of your privileges. I know I shall be found blameless. Do you labor to be found of Him *in peace, without spot.*'

"(10.) Saturday morning, she prayed nearly as follows: 'I know, my Lord, my life is prolonged only to do Thy will. And though I should never eat or drink more' (she had not swallowed anything for near eight-and-twenty hours), 'Thy will be done. I am willing to be kept so a twelve-month: *Man liveth not by bread alone.* I praise Thee that there is not a shadow of complaining in our streets. In that sense we know not what sickness means. Indeed, Lord, *neither*

.ife, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, no, nor any creature, shall separate us from Thy *love* one moment. Bless these, that there be no lack in their souls. I believe there shall not. I pray in faith.'

"On Sunday and Monday she was light-headed, but sensible at times. It then plainly appeared, her heart was still in heaven. One said to her, 'Jesus is our mark.' She replied: 'I have but one mark; I am all spiritual.' Miss M. said to her, 'You dwell in God.' She answered: 'Altogether.' A person asked her, 'Do you love me?' She said, 'O, I love Christ; I love my Christ.' To another she said, 'I shall not long be here; Jesus is precious, very precious indeed.' She said to Miss M., 'The Lord is very good; He keeps my soul above all.' For fifteen hours before she died, she was in strong convulsions: her sufferings were extreme. One said, 'You are made perfect through sufferings.' She said, 'More and more so.' After lying quiet some time, she said, 'Lord, Thou art strong!' Then pausing a considerable space, she uttered her last words, 'Jesus is all in all to me: glory be to Him through time and eternity.' After this, she lay still for about half an hour, and then expired without a sigh or groan."

25. The next year, the number of those who believed they were saved from sin still increasing, I judged it needful to publish, chiefly for their use,

"FARTHER THOUGHTS ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION":—

"1. *How is 'Christ the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth?'* Rom x. 4.

In order to understand this, you must understand what law is here spoken of; and this, I apprehend, is, (1.) The Mosaic law, the whole Mosaic dispensation; which St. Paul continually speaks of as one, though containing three parts,

the political, moral, and ceremonial. (2.) The Adamic law, that given to Adam in innocence, properly called 'the law of works.' This is in substance the same with the angelic law, being common to angels and men. It required that man should use, to the glory of God, all the powers with which he was created. Now, he was created free from any defect, either in his understanding or his affections. His body was then no clog to the mind; it did not hinder his apprehending all things clearly, judging truly concerning them, and reasoning justly, if he reasoned at all. I say, *if he reasoned;* for possibly he did not. Perhaps he had no need of reasoning, till his corruptible body pressed down the mind, and impaired its native faculties. Perhaps, till then, the mind saw every truth that offered as directly as the eye now sees the light.

"Consequently, this law, proportioned to his original powers, required that he should always think, always speak, and always act precisely right, in every point whatever. He was well able so to do: and God could not but require the service he was able to pay.

"But Adam fell; and his incorruptible body became corruptible; and ever since, it is a clog to the soul, and hinders its operations. Hence, at present, no child of man can at all times apprehend clearly, or judge truly. And where either the judgment or apprehension is wrong, it is impossible to reason justly. Therefore, it is as natural for a man to mistake as to breathe; and he can no more live without the one than without the other: consequently no man is able to perform the service which the Adamic law requires.

"And no man is obliged to perform it; God does not require it of any man: for Christ is the end of the Adamic, as well as the Mosaic, law. By His death He hath put an end to both; He hath abolished both the one and the other, with regard to man; and the obligation to observe either

the one or the other is vanished away. Nor is any man living bound to observe the Adamic more than the Mosaic law. (I mean, it is not the condition either of present or future salvation.)

"In the room of this, Christ hath established another, namely, the law of faith. Not every one that doeth, but every one that believeth, now receiveth righteousness, in the full sense of the word; that is, he is justified, sanctified and glorified.

"2. *Are we then dead to the law?*

"We are 'dead to the law, by the body of Christ' given for us; Rom. vii. 4; to the Adamic as well as Mosaic law. We are wholly freed therefrom by His death; that law expiring with Him.

"3. *How, then, are we 'not without law to God, but under the law to Christ'?* 1 Cor. ix. 21.

"We are without that law; but it does not follow that we are without any law; for God hath established another law in its place, even the law of faith; and we are all under this law to God and to Christ; both our Creator and our Redeemer require us to observe it.

Love is the Fulfilling of the Law.

"4. *Is love the fulfilling of this law?*

"Unquestionably it is. The whole law under which we now are, is fulfilled by love: Rom. xiii. 9, 10. Faith working or animated by love is all that God now requires of man. He has substituted (not sincerity, but) love, in the room of angelic perfection.

"5. *How is 'love the end of the commandment'?* 1 Tim i. 5.

"It is the end of every commandment of God. It is the point aimed at by the whole and every part of the Chris-

tian institution. The foundation is faith, purifying the heart; the end love, preserving a good conscience.

"6. *What love is this?*

"The loving the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength; and the loving our neighbor, every man as ourselves, as our own souls.

"7. *What are the fruits or properties of this love?*

"St. Paul informs us at large, love is long-suffering. It suffers all the weaknesses of the children of God, all the wickedness of the children of the world; and that not for a little time only, but as long as God pleases. In all, it sees the hand of God, and willingly submits thereto. Meantime, it is kind. In all, and after all, it suffers, it is soft, mild, tender, benign. 'Love envieth not;' it excludes every kind and degree of envy out of the heart; 'love acteth not rashly,' in a violent, headstrong manner, nor passes any rash or severe judgment: it 'doth not behave itself indecently;' is not rude, does not act out of character: 'seeketh not her own' ease, pleasure, honor, or profit; 'is not provoked;' expels all anger from the heart: 'thinketh no evil;' casteth out all jealousy, suspiciousness, and readiness to believe evil: 'rejoiceth not in iniquity;' yea, weeps at the sin or folly of its bitterest enemies: 'but rejoiceth in the truth;' in the holiness and happiness of every child of man. 'Love covereth all things,' speaks evil of no man; 'believeth all things,' that tend to the advantage of another's character. It 'hopeth all things,' whatever may extenuate the faults which cannot be denied; and it 'endureth all things,' which God can permit, or men and devils inflict. This is 'the law of Christ, the perfect law, the law of liberty.'

"And this distinction between the 'law of faith' (or love) and 'the law of works,' is neither a subtle nor an unnecessary distinction. It is plain, easy, and intelligible to any

common understanding. And it is absolutely necessary, to prevent a thousand doubts and fears, even in those who do 'walk in love.'

"8. *But do we not 'in many things offend all,' yea, the best of us, even against this law?*

"In one sense we do not, while all our tempers, and thoughts, and words, and works, spring from love. But in another we do, and shall do, more or less, as long as we remain in the body. For neither love nor the 'unction of the Holy One' makes us infallible: therefore, through unavoidable defect of understanding, we cannot but mistake in many things. And these mistakes will frequently occasion something wrong, both in our temper, and words, and actions. From mistaking his character, we may love a person less than he really deserves. And by the same mistake we are unavoidably led to speak or act, with regard to that person, in such a manner as is contrary to this law in some or other of the preceding instances.

The Atonement Needed.

"9. *Do we not then need Christ, even on this account?*

"The holiest of men still need Christ, as their Prophet, as 'the light of the world.' For He does not give them light, but from moment to moment; the instant He withdraws, all is darkness. They still need Christ as their King; for God does not give them a stock of holiness. But unless they receive a supply every moment, nothing but unholiness would remain. They still need Christ as their Priest, to make atonement for their holy things. Even perfect holiness is acceptable to God only through Jesus Christ.

"10. *May not, then, the very best of men adopt the dying martyr's confession: 'I am in myself nothing but sin, darkness hell; but thou art my light, my holiness, my heaven'?*

"Not exactly. But the best of men say, 'Thou art my light, my holiness, my heaven. Through my union with Thee, I am full of light, of holiness, and happiness. But if I were left to myself, I should be nothing but sin, dark ness, hell.'

"But to proceed: The best of men need Christ as their Priest, their Atonement, their Advocate with the Father; not only as the continuance of their every blessing depends on His death and intercession, but on account of their coming short of the law of love. For every man living does so. You who feel all love, compare yourselves with the preceding description. Weigh yourselves in this balance, and see if you are not wanting in many particulars.

"11. *But if all this be consistent with Christian perfection, that perfection is not freedom from all sin; seeing 'sin is the transgression of the law': and the perfect transgress the very law they are under. Besides, they need the atonement of Christ; and He is the atonement of nothing but sin. Is, then, the term, 'sinless perfection,' proper?*

"It is not worth disputing about. But observe in what sense the persons in question need the atonement of Christ. They do not need Him to reconcile them to God afresh; for they are reconciled. They do not need Him to restore the favor of God, but to continue it. He does not procure pardon for them anew, but 'ever liveth to make intercession for them;' and 'by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified,' Heb. x. 14.

"For want of duly considering this, some deny that they need the atonement of Christ. Indeed, exceeding few; I do not remember to have found five of them in England. Of the two, I would sooner give up perfection. But we need not give up either one or the other. The perfection I hold, 'Love rejoicing exermore, praying without ceasing, and

in everything giving thanks,' is well consistent with it; if any hold a perfection which is not, they must look to it.

"12. *Does then Christian perfection imply any more than sincerity?*

"Not if you mean by that word, love filling the heart, expelling pride, anger, desire, self-will; rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in everything giving thanks. But I doubt, few use sincerity in this sense. Therefore, I think the old word is best.

"A person may be sincere who has all his natural tempers, pride, anger, lust, self-will. But he is not perfect, till his heart is cleansed from these, and all its other corruptions.

"To clear this point a little farther: I know many that love God with all their heart. He is their one desire, their one delight, and they are continually happy in Him. They love their neighbor as themselves. They feel as sincere, fervent, constant a desire for the happiness of every man, good or bad, friend or enemy, as for their own. They rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks. Their souls are continually streaming up to God, in holy joy, prayer, and praise. This is a point of fact; and this is plain, sound, Scriptural experience.

"But even these souls dwell in a shattered body, and are so pressed down thereby, that they cannot always exert themselves as they would, by thinking, speaking, and acting, precisely right. For want of better bodily organs, they must at times think, speak, or act wrong; not, indeed, through a defect of love, but through a defect of knowledge. And while this is the case, notwithstanding that defect, and its consequences, they fulfil the law of love.

"Yet, as even in this case, there is not a full conformity to the perfect law, so the most perfect do, on this very account, need the blood of atonement, and may properly for them-

selves, as well as for their brethren, say, 'Forgive us our trespasses.'

"13. *But if Christ has put an end to that law, what need of any atonement for their transgressing it?*

"Observe in what sense He has put an end to it, and the difficulty vanishes. Were it not for the abiding merit of His death, and His continual intercession for us, the law would condemn us still. These, therefore, we still need for every transgression of it.

Holiness does not Exclude Temptation.

"14. *But can one that is saved from sin be tempted?*

"Yes; for Christ was tempted.

"15. *However what you call temptation, I call the corruption of my heart. And how will you distinguish one from the other?*

"In some cases, it is impossible to distinguish, without the direct witness of the Spirit. But in general, one may distinguish thus: —

"One commends me. Here is a temptation to pride. But instantly my soul is humbled before God. And I feel no pride; of which I am as sure, as that pride is not humility.

"A man strikes me. Here is a temptation to anger. But my heart overflows with love. And I feel no anger at all; of which I can be as sure, as that love and anger are not the same.

"A woman solicits me. Here is a temptation to lust. But in an instant, I shrink back. And I feel no desire or lust at all; of which I can be as sure, as that my hand is cold or hot.

"Thus it is, if I am tempted by a present object; and it is the same, if, when it is absent, the devil recalls a com-

mendation, an injury, or a woman, to my mind. In the instant, the soul repels the temptation, and remains filled with pure love.

"And the difference is still plainer, when I compare my present state with my past, wherein I felt temptation, and corruption too.

How We may Know that We are Sanctified.

"16. *But how do you know that you are sanctified, saved from your inbred corruption?*

"I can know it no otherwise than I know that I am justified. 'Hereby know we that we are of God,' in either sense, 'by the Spirit that He hath given us.'

"We know it by the witness and by the fruit of the Spirit. And, First, by the witness. As, when we were justified, the Spirit bore witness with our spirit, that our sins were forgiven; so, when we were sanctified, He bore witness that they were taken away. Indeed, the witness of sanctification is not always clear at first (as neither is that of justification); neither is it afterward always the same, but like that of justification, sometimes stronger, and sometimes fainter. Yea, and sometimes it is withdrawn. Yet, in general, the latter testimony of the Spirit, is both as clear and as steady as the former.

"17. *But what need is there of it, seeing sanctification is a real change, not a relative only, like justification?*

"But is the new birth a relative change only? Is not this a real change? Therefore, if we need no witness of our sanctification, because it is a real change, for the same reason, we should need none, that we are born of, or are, the children of God.

"18. *But does not sanctification shine by its own light?*

"And does not the new birth too? Sometimes it does,

and so does sanctification; at others, it does not. In the hour of temptation, Satan clouds the work of God, and injects various doubts and reasonings, especially in those who have either very weak or very strong understandings. At such times, there is absolute need of that witness, without which, the work of sanctification not only could not be discerned, but could no longer subsist. Were it not for this, the soul could not then abide in the love of God; much less could it rejoice evermore, and in every thing give thanks. In these circumstances, therefore, a direct testimony that we are sanctified, is necessary in the highest degree.

"But I have no witness that I am saved from sin. And yet I have no doubt of it. Very well; as long as you have no doubt, it is enough; when you have, you will need that witness.

Scripture Proof of the Witness of the Spirit to Sanctification.

"19. *But what scripture makes mention of any such thing, or gives any reason to expect it?*

"That Scripture, 'We have received, not the spirit that is of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we may know the things which are freely given us of God,' 1 Cor. ii. 12.

"Now surely sanctification is one of 'the things which are freely given us of God.' And no possible reason can be assigned why this should be excepted, when the Apostle says, 'We receive the Spirit' for this very end, 'that we may know the things which are thus 'freely given us.'

"Is not the same thing implied in that well-known Scripture, 'The Spirit itself witnesses with our spirit, that we are the children of God?' Rom. viii. 16. Does He witness this only to those who are children of God in the lowest sense? Nay, but to those also who are such in the highest sense.

And does He not witness, that they are such in the highest sense? What reason have we to doubt it?

"What if a man were to affirm (as, indeed, many do) that this witness belongs only to the highest class of Christians? Would not you answer, 'The Apostle makes no restriction; therefore, doubtless, it belongs to all the children of God'? And will not the same answer hold, if any affirm, that it belongs only to the lowest class?

"Consider likewise 1 John v. 19: 'We know that we are of God.' How? 'By the Spirit that He hath given us.' Nay, 'hereby we know that He abideth in us.' And what ground have we, either from Scripture or reason, to exclude the witness, any more than the fruit, of the Spirit, from being here intended? By this, then, also, 'we know that we are of God,' and in what sense we are so; whether we are babes, young men, or fathers, we know in the same manner.

"Not that I affirm that all young men, or even fathers, have this testimony every moment. There may be intermissions, of the direct testimony that they are thus born of God; but these intermissions are fewer and shorter as they grow up in Christ; and some have the testimony both of their justification and sanctification, without any intermission at all; which I presume, more might have, did they walk humbly and closely with God.

"20. *May not some of them have a testimony from the Spirit, that they shall not finally fall from God?*

"They may. And this persuasion, that neither life nor death shall separate them from Him, far from being hurtful, may in some circumstances be extremely useful. These, therefore, we should in no wise grieve, but earnestly encourage them to 'hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast to the end.'

"21. *But have any a testimony from the Spirit that they shall never sin?*

"We know not what God may vouchsafe to some particular persons; but we do not find any general state described in Scripture, from which a man cannot draw back to sin. If there were any state wherein this was impossible, it would be that of these who are sanctified, who are 'fathers in Christ, who rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks'; but it is not impossible for these to draw back. They who are sanctified yet may fall and perish: Heb. x. 29. Even fathers in Christ need that warning: 'Love not the world,' 1 John ii. 15. They who 'rejoice, pray,' and 'give thanks without ceasing,' may, nevertheless, 'quench the Spirit,' 1 Thess. v. 16, etc. Nay, even they who are 'sealed unto the day of redemption,' may yet 'grieve the Holy Spirit of God,' Eph. iv. 30.

"Although, therefore, God may give such a witness to some particular persons, yet it is not to be expected by Christians in general, there being no Scripture whereon to ground such an expectation.

The Fruit of the Spirit in Sanctification.

"22. *By what 'fruit of the Spirit,' may we 'know that we are of God,' even in the highest sense?*

"By love, joy, peace, always abiding; by invariable long-suffering, patience, resignation; by gentleness, triumphing over all provocation; by goodness, mildness, sweetness, tenderness of spirit; by fidelity, simplicity, godly sincerity; by meekness, calmness, evenness of spirit; by temperance, not only in food and sleep, but in all things natural and spiritual.

"23. *But what great matter is there in this? Have we not all this when we are justified?*

"What! total resignation to the will of God, without any mixture of self-will? gentleness, without any touch of anger, even the moment we are provoked? love to God, without

the least love to the creature, but in and for God, excluding all pride? love to man, excluding all envy, all jealousy, and rash judging? meekness, keeping the whole soul inviolably calm? and temperance in all things? Deny that any ever came up to this, if you please; but do not say all who are justified do.

THE JUSTIFIED FEEL ANGER, PRIDE, AND SELF-WILL.

"24. *But some who are newly justified do. What then will we say to these?*

"If they really do, I will say they are sanctified; saved from sin in that moment; and that they never need lose what God has given, or feel sin any more.

"But certainly this is an exempt case. It is otherwise with the generality of those that are justified: they feel in themselves more or less pride, anger, self-will, a heart bent to backsliding. And, till they have gradually mortified these, they are not fully renewed in love.

"25. *But is not this the case of all that are justified? Do they not gradually die to sin and grow in grace, till at, or perhaps a little before, death, God perfects them in love?*

"I believe this is the case of most, but not all. God usually gives a considerable time for men to receive light, to grow in grace, to do and suffer His will, before they are either justified or sanctified; but He does not invariably adhere to this; sometimes He 'cuts short His work'; He does the work of many years in a few weeks; perhaps in a week, a day, an hour. He justifies or sanctifies both those who have done or suffered nothing, and who have not had time for a gradual growth either in light or grace. And 'may He not do what He will with His own? Is thine eye evil, because He is good?'

"It need not, therefore, be affirmed over and over, and

proved by forty texts of Scripture, either that most men are perfected in love at last, that there is a gradual work of God in the soul, or that, generally speaking, it is a long time, even many years, before sin is destroyed. All this we know: but we know likewise, that God may, with man's good leave, 'cut short His work,' in whatever degree He pleases, and do the usual work of many years in a moment. He does so in many instances; and yet there is a gradual work, both before and after that moment; so that one may affirm the work is gradual; another, it is instantaneous, without any manner of contradiction.

"26. *Does St. Paul mean any more by being 'sealed with the Spirit,' than being 'renewed in love'?*

"Perhaps in one place (2 Cor. i. 22), he does not mean so much; but in another (Eph. i. 13), he seems to include both the fruit and the witness; and that in a higher degree than we experience even when we are first 'renewed in love'; God 'sealeth us with the Spirit of promise,' by giving us 'the full assurance of hope'; such a confidence of receiving all the promises of God, as excludes the possibility of doubting; with that Holy Spirit, by universal holiness, stamping the whole image of God on our hearts.

"27. *But how can those who are thus sealed, 'grieve the Holy Spirit of God'?*

"St. Paul tells you very particularly, (1.) By such conversation as is not profitable, not to the use of edifying, not apt to minister grace to the hearers. (2.) By relapsing into bitterness or want of kindness. (3.) By wrath, lasting displeasure, or want of tender-heartedness. (4.) By anger, however soon it is over; want of instantly forgiving one another. (5.) By clamor or bawling, loud, harsh, rough speaking. (6.) By evil speaking, whispering, tale-bearing; needlessly mentioning the fault of an absent person, though in ever so soft a manner.

HOW HE VIEWED THOSE IN LONDON WHO WERE SANCTIFIED.

"28. *What do you think of those in London, who seem to have been lately 'renewed in love'?*

"There is something very peculiar in the experience of the greater part of them. One would expect that a believer should first be filled with love, and thereby emptied of sin; whereas these were emptied of sin first, and then filled with love. Perhaps it pleased God to work in this manner, to make His work more plain and undeniable; and to distinguish it more clearly from that overflowing love which is often felt even in a justified state.

"It seems likewise most agreeable to the great promise: 'From all your filthiness I will cleanse you; a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you,' Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26.

"But I do not think of them all alike; there is a wide difference between some of them and others. I think most of them with whom I have spoken, have much faith, love, joy, and peace. Some of these I believe are renewed in love, and have the direct witness of it; and they manifest the fruit above described, in all their words and actions. Now, let any man call this what he will, it is what I call perfection.

"But some who have much love, peace, and joy, yet have not the direct witness; and others who think they have, are, nevertheless, manifestly wanting in the fruit. How many I will not say; perhaps one in ten; perhaps more or fewer. But some are undeniably wanting in long-suffering, Christian resignation. They do not see the hand of God in whatever occurs, and cheerfully embrace it. They do not in everything give thanks, and rejoice evermore. They are not happy, at least, not always happy; for sometimes they complain. They say this or that is hard!

"Some are wanting in gentleness. They resist evil, instead of turning the other cheek. They do not receive reproach with gentleness; no, nor even reproof. Nay, they are not able to bear contradiction, without the appearance, at least, of resentment. If they are reproved or contradicted, though mildly, they do not take it well; they behave with more distance and reserve than they did before. If they are reproved or contradicted harshly, they answer it with harshness; with a loud voice, or with an angry tone, or in a sharp and surly manner. They speak sharply or roughly, when they reprove others; and behave roughly to their inferiors.

"Some are wanting in goodness. They are not kind, mild, sweet, amiable, soft, and loving at all times, in their spirit, in their words, in their look and air, in the whole tenor of their behavior; and that to all, high and low, rich and poor, without respect of persons; particularly to them that are out of the way, to opposers, and to those of their own household. They do not long, study, endeavor, by every means, to make all about them happy. They can see them uneasy, and not be concerned; perhaps they make them so; and then wipe their mouths and say, 'Why, they deserve it; it is their own fault.'

"Some are wanting in fidelity, a nice regard to truth, simplicity, and godly sincerity. Their love is hardly without dissimulation; something like guile is found in their mouth. To avoid roughness, they lean to the other extreme. They are smooth to an excess, so as scarce to avoid a degree of fawning, or of seeming to mean what they do not.

"Some are wanting in meekness, quietness of spirit, composure, evenness of temper. They are up and down, sometimes high, sometimes low; their mind is not well balanced. Their affections are either not in due proportion; they have too much of one, too little of another; or they are not duly

mixed and tempered together, so as to counterpoise each other. Hence there is often a jar. Their soul is out of tune, and cannot make the true harmony.

"Some are wanting in temperance. They do not steadily use that kind and degree of food, which they know, or might know, would most conduce to the health, strength, and vigor, of the body: or they are not temperate in sleep; they do not rigorously adhere to what is best both for body and mind; otherwise they would constantly go to bed and rise early, and at a fixed hour: or they sup late, which is neither good for body nor soul: or they use neither fasting nor abstinence: or they prefer (which are so many sorts of intemperance) that preaching, reading, or conversation, which gives them transient joy and comfort, before that which brings godly sorrow, or instruction in righteousness. Such joy is not sanctified; it doth not tend to, and terminate in, the crucifixion of the heart. Such faith doth not centre in God, but rather in itself.

"So far all is plain. I believe you have faith, and love, and joy and peace. Yet you who are particularly concerned know each for yourself, that you are wanting in the respects above mentioned. You are wanting either in long-suffering, gentleness, or goodness; either in fidelity, meekness, or temperance. Let us not, then, on either hand, fight about words. In the thing we clearly agree.

"You have not what I call perfection; if others will call it so, they may. However, hold fast what you have, and earnestly pray for what you have not.

Those Perfect in Love can Grow in Grace or They can Fall from Grace.

"29. *Can those who are perfect grow in grace?*

"Undoubtedly they can; and that not only while they are in the body, but to all eternity.

"30. *Can they fall from it?*

"I am well assured they can; matter of fact puts this beyond dispute. Formerly we thought, one saved from sin could not fall; now we know the contrary. We are surrounded with instances of those who lately experienced all that I mean by perfection. They had both the fruit of the Spirit, and the witness; but they have now lost both. Neither does any one stand by virtue of anything that is implied in the nature of the state. There is no such height or strength of holiness as it is impossible to fall from. If there be any that cannot fall, this wholly depends on the promise of God.

"31. *Can those who fall from this state recover it?*

"Why not? We have many instances of this also. Nay, it is an exceeding common thing for persons to lose it more than once, before they are established therein.

"It is therefore to guard them who are saved from sin, from every occasion of stumbling, that I give the following advices. But first I shall speak plainly concerning the work itself.

"I esteem this late work to be of God; probably the greatest now upon earth. Yet, like all others, this also is mixed with much human frailty. But these weaknesses are far less than might have been expected; and ought to have been joyfully borne by all that loved and followed after righteousness. That there have been a few weak, warm-headed men, is no reproach to the work itself, no just ground for accusing a multitude of sober-minded men, who are patterns of strict holiness. Yet (just the contrary to what ought to have been) the opposition is great; the helps few. Hereby many are hindered from seeking faith and holiness by the false zeal of others; and some who at first began to run well are turned out of the way.

ADVICE TO THOSE SANCTIFIED.

"32. *What is the First advice* that you would give them?*

"Watch and pray continually against pride. If God has cast it out, see that it enter no more: it is full as dangerous as desire. And you may slide back into it unawares; especially if you think there is no danger of it. 'Nay, but I ascribe all I have to God.' So you may, and be proud nevertheless. For it is pride, not only to ascribe anything we have to ourselves, but to think we have what we really have not. Mr. L——, for instance, ascribed all the light he had to God, and so far he was humble; but then he thought he had more light than any man living; and this was palpable pride. So you ascribe all the knowledge you have to God; and in this respect you are humble. But if you think you have more than you really have; or if you think you are so taught of God, as no longer to need man's teaching; pride lieth at the door. Yes, you have need to be taught, not only by Mr. Morgan, by one another, by Mr. Maxfield, or me, but by the weakest preacher in London; yea, by all men. For God sendeth by whom he will send.

"Do not therefore say to any who would advise or reprove you, 'You are blind; you cannot teach me.' Do not say, 'This is your wisdom, your carnal reason;' but calmly weigh the thing before God.

"Always remember, much grace does not imply much light. These do not always go together. As there may be

* The advices which follow were published in a separate tract in the year 1762, under the title of "Cautions and Directions given to the Greatest Professors in the Methodist Societies," with the following motto:—

> "Set the false witnesses aside,
> Yet hold the truth for ever fast."

It was evidently intended to guard the people against the mischievous extravagances of George Bell and his friends, a particular account of whom is given in Mr. Wesley's Journal about that period. — EDIT.

much light where there is but little love, so there may be much love where there is little light. The heart has more heat than the eye; yet it cannot see. And God has wisely tempered the members of the body together, that none may say to another, 'I have no need of thee.'

"To imagine none can teach you, but those who are themselves saved from sin, is a very great and dangerous mistake. Give not place to it for a moment; it would lead you into a thousand other mistakes, and that irrecoverably. No; dominion is not founded in grace, as the madmen of the last age talked. Obey and regard 'them that are over you in the Lord,' and do not think you know better than them. Know their place and your own; always remembering, much love does not imply much light.

"The not observing this has led some into many mistakes, and into the appearance, at least, of pride. Oh, beware of the appearance, and the thing! Let 'there be in you that lowly mind which was in Christ Jesus.' And 'be ye likewise clothed with humility.' Let it not only fill, but cover you all over. Let modesty and self-diffidence appear in all your words and actions. Let all you speak and do show that you are little, and base, and mean, and vile in your own eyes.

"As one instance of this, be always ready to own any fault you have been in. If you have at any time thought, spoke, or acted wrong, be not backward to acknowledge it. Never dream that this will hurt the cause of God; no, it will farther it. Be, therefore, open, and frank, when you are taxed with anything; do not seek either to evade or disguise it; but let it appear just as it is, and you will thereby not hinder, but adorn the Gospel.

"33. *What is the Second advice which you would give them?*

"Beware of that daughter of pride, enthusiasm. Oh, keep at the utmost distance from it! Give no place to a

heated imagination. Do not hastily ascribe things to God. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, visions, or revelations to be from God. They may be from Him. They may be from nature. They may be from the devil. Therefore, 'believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God.' Try all things by the written word, and let all bow down before it. You are in danger of enthusiasm every hour, if you depart ever so little from Scripture; yea, or from the plain, literal meaning of any text, taken in connection with the context. And so you are, if you despise or lightly esteem reason, knowledge, or human learning; every one of which is an excellent gift of God, and may serve the noblest purposes.

"I advise you, never to use the words, wisdom, reason, or knowledge, by way of reproach. On the contrary, pray that you yourself may abound in them more and more. If you mean worldly wisdom, useless knowledge, false reasoning, say so; and throw away the chaff, but not the wheat.

"One general inlet to enthusiasm is, expecting the end without the means; the expecting knowledge, for instance, without searching the Scriptures, and consulting the children of God; the expecting spiritual strength without constant prayer, and steady watchfulness; the expecting any blessing without hearing the word of God at every opportunity.

"Some have been ignorant of this device of Satan. They have left off searching the Scriptures. They said, 'God writes all the Scriptures on my heart. Therefore, I have no need to read it.' Others thought they had not so much need of hearing, and so grew slack in attending the morning preaching. Oh, take warning, you who are concerned herein! You have listened to the voice of a stranger. Fly back to Christ, and keep in the good old way, which was 'once delivered to the saints;' the way that even a heathen

bore testimony of: 'That the Christians rose early every day to sing hymns to Christ as God.'

"The very desire of 'growing in grace' may sometimes be an inlet of enthusiasm. As it continually leads us to seek new grace, it may lead us unawares to seek something else new, beside new degrees of love to God and man. So it has led some to seek and fancy they had received gifts of a new kind, after a new heart, as, (1.) The loving God with all our mind: (2.) With all our soul: (3.) With all our strength: (4.) Oneness with God: (5.) Oneness with Christ: (6.) Having our life hid with Christ in God: (7.) Being dead with Christ: (8.) Rising with Him: (9.) The sitting with Him in heavenly places: (10.) The being taken up into His throne: (11.) The being in the New Jerusalem: (12.) The seeing the tabernacle of God come down among men: (13.) The being dead to all works: (14.) The not being liable to death, pain, or grief, or temptation.

"One ground of many of these mistakes is, the taking every fresh, strong application of any of these Scriptures to the heart, to be a gift of a new kind; not knowing that several of these Scriptures are not fulfilled yet; that most of the others are fulfilled when we are justified; the rest, the moment we are sanctified. It remains only to experience them in higher degrees. This is all we have to expect.

"Another ground of these and a thousand mistakes, is, the not considering deeply, that love is the highest gift of God; humble, gentle, patient love; that all visions, revelations, manifestations whatever, are little things compared to love; and that all the gifts above mentioned are either the same with, or infinitely inferior to, it.

"It were well you should be thoroughly sensible of this, — the heaven of heavens is love. There is nothing higher in religion; there is, in effect, nothing else; if you look for anything but more love, you are looking wide of the mark.

you are getting out of the royal way. And when you are asking others, 'Have you received this or that blessing? if you mean anything but more love, you mean wrong; you are leading them out of the way, and putting them upon a false scent. Settle it then in your heart, that from the moment God has saved you from all sin, you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth of the Corinthians. You can go no higher than this, till you are carried into Abraham's bosom.

"I say yet again, beware of enthusiasm. Such is, the imagining you have the gift of prophesying, or discerning of spirits, which I do not believe one of you has; no nor ever had yet. Beware of judging people to be either right or wrong by your own feelings. This is no Scriptural way of judging. Oh, keep close to 'the law and to the testimony!'

"34. *What is the Third?*

"Beware of Antinomianism; 'making void the law,' or any part of it, 'through faith.' Enthusiasm naturally leads to this; indeed, they can scarcely be separated. This may steal upon you in a thousand forms, so that you cannot be too watchful against it. Take heed of everything, whether in principle or practice, which has any tendency thereto. Even that great truth, that 'Christ is the end of the law,' may betray us into it, if we do not consider that He has adopted every point of the moral law, and grafted it into the law of love. Beware of thinking, 'Because I am filled with love, I need not have so much holiness. Because I pray always, therefore I need no set time for private prayer. Because I watch always, therefore I need no particular self-examination.' Let us 'magnify the law, the whole written word, 'and make it honorable.' Let this be our voice: 'I prize Thy commandments above gold or precious stones.

Oh, what love have I unto Thy law! all the day long is my study in it.' Beware of Antinomian books; particularly the works of Dr. Crisp, and Mr. Saltmarsh. They contain many excellent things; and this makes them the more dangerous. Oh, be warned in time! Do not play with fire. Do not put your hand on the hole of a cockatrice' den. I entreat you beware of bigotry. Let not your love or bene ficence be confined to Methodists, so-called only; much less to that very small part of them who seem to be renewed in love; or to those who believe yours and their report. Oh, make not this your Shibboleth! Beware of stillness; ceasing in a wrong sense from your own works. To mention one instance out of many: 'You have received,' says one, 'a great blessing. But you began to talk of it, and to do this and that; so you lost it. You should have been still.'

"Beware of self-indulgence; yea, and making a virtue of it, laughing at self-denial, and taking up the cross daily, at fasting or abstinence. Beware of censoriousness; thinking or calling them, that any ways oppose you, whether in judgment or practice, blind, dead, fallen, or 'enemies to the work.' Once more, beware of Solifidianism; crying nothing but 'Believe, believe!' and condemning those as ignorant or legal who speak in a more Scriptural way. At certain seasons, indeed, it may be right to treat of nothing but repentance, or merely of faith, or altogether of holiness; but, in general, our call is to declare the whole counsel of God, and to prophesy according to the analogy of faith. The written word treats of the whole and every particular branch of righteousness, descending to its minutest branches; as to be sober, courteous, diligent, patient, to honor all men. So, likewise, the Holy Spirit works the same in our hearts, not merely creating desires after holiness in general, but strongly inclining us to every particular grace, leading us to every individual part of 'whatsoever is lovely.' And

this with the greatest propriety: for as 'by works faith is made perfect,' so the completing or destroying the work of faith, and enjoying the favor, or suffering the displeasure, of God, greatly depends on every single act of obedience or disobedience.

"35. *What is the Fourth?*

"Beware of sins of omission; lose no opportunity of doing good in any kind. Be zealous of good works; willingly omit no work, either of piety or mercy. Do all the good you possibly can, to the bodies and souls of men. Particularly, 'thou shalt in any wise reprove thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him.' Be active. Give no place to indolence or sloth; give no occasion to say, 'Ye are idle, ye are idle.' Many will say so still; but let your whole spirit and behavior refute the slander. Be always employed; lose no shred of time; gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost. And whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. Be 'slow to speak,' and wary in speaking. 'In a multitude of words there wanteth not sin.' Do not talk much; neither long at a time. Few can converse profitably above an hour. Keep at the utmost distance from pious chit-chat, from religious gossiping.

"36. *What is the Fifth?*

"Beware of desiring any thing but God. Now you desire nothing else; every other desire is driven out; see that none enter again. 'Keep thyself pure;' let your 'eye' remain 'single, and your whole body shall be full of light.' Admit no desire of pleasing food, or any other pleasure of sense; no desire of pleasing the eye or the imagination, by any thing grand, or new, or beautiful; no desire of money, of praise, or esteem; of happiness in any creature. You may bring these desires back; but you need not; you need feel them no more. O stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free!

"Be patterns to all of denying yourselves, and taking your cross daily. Let them see that you make no accou of any pleasure which does not bring you nearer to God, no regard any pain which does; that you simply aim at pleasing Him, whether by doing or suffering; that the constant language of your heart, with regard to pleasure or pain, honor or dishonor, riches or poverty, is,

'All's alike to me, so I
In my Lord may live and die!'

"37. *What is the Sixth?*

"Beware of schism, of making a rent in the Church of Christ. That inward disunion, the members ceasing to have a reciprocal love 'one for another' (1 Cor. xii. 25), is the very root of all contention, and every outward separation. Beware of every thing tending thereto. Beware of a dividing spirit; shun whatever has the least aspect that way. Therefore, say not, 'I am of Paul, or of Apollos;' the very thing which occasioned the schism at Corinth. Say not, 'This is my preacher; the best preacher in England. Give me him, and take all the rest.' All this tends to breed or foment division, to disunite those whom God hath joined. Do not despise or run down any preacher; do not exalt any one above the rest, lest you hurt both him and the cause of God. On the other hand, do not bear hard upon any by reason of some incoherency or inaccuracy of expression; no, nor for some mistakes, were they really such.

"Likewise, if you would avoid schism, observe every rule of the society, and of the bands, for conscience' sake. Never omit meeting your class or band; never absent yourself from any public meeting. These are the very sinews of our society; and whatever weakens, or tends to weaken, our regard for these, or exactness in attending them, strikes at the very root of our community. As one saith, 'That part of our economy, the private weekly meetings for prayer,

examination, and particular exhortation, has been the greatest means of deepening and confirming every blessing that was received by the word preached, and of diffusing it to others, who could not attend the public ministry; whereas, without this religious connection and intercourse, the most ardent attempts, by mere preaching, have proved of no lasting use.'

"Suffer not one thought of separating from your brethren, whether their opinions agree with yours, or not. Do not dream that any man sins in not believing you, in not taking your word; or that this or that opinion is essential to the work, and both must stand or fall together. Beware of impatience of contradiction. Do not condemn or think hardly of those who cannot see just as you see, or who judge it their duty to contradict you, whether in a great thing, or a small. I fear some of us have thought hardly of others, merely because they contradicted what we affirmed. All this tends to division; and, by every thing of this kind, we are teaching them an evil lesson against ourselves.

"O, beware of touchiness, of testiness, not bearing to be spoken to; starting at the least word; and flying from those who do not implicitly receive mine or another's sayings!

"Expect contradiction and opposition, together with crosses of various kinds. Consider the words of St. Paul: 'To you it is given, in the behalf of Christ,'—for His sake, as a fruit of His death and intercession for you,—'not only to believe, but also to suffer for His sake,' Phil. i. 29. *It is given!* God gives you this opposition or reproach; it is a fresh token of His love. And will you disown the Giver; or spurn His gift, and count it a misfortune? Will you not rather say, 'Father, the hour is come, that Thou shouldest be glorified; now Thou givest Thy child to suffer something for Thee; do with me according to Thy will?' Know that these things, far from being hindrances to the work of God,

or to your soul, unless, by your own fault, are not only unavoidable in the course of providence, but profitable, yea, necessary for you. Therefore, receive them from God (not from chance), with willingness, with thankfulness. Receive them from men with humility, meekness, yieldingness, gentleness, sweetness. Why should not even your outward appearance and manner be soft? Remember the character of Lady Cutts. 'It was said of the Roman Emperor Titus, Never any one came displeased from him. But it might be said of her, Never any one went displeased to her; so secure were all of the kind and favorable reception which they would meet with from her.'

"Beware of tempting others to separate from you. Give no offense which can possibly be avoided; see that your practice be in all things suitable to your profession, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour. Be particularly careful in speaking of yourself. You may not, indeed, deny the work of God; but speak of it when you are called thereto, in the most inoffensive manner possible. Avoid all magnificent, pompous words; indeed, you need give it no general name; neither perfection, sanctification, the second blessing, nor the having attained. Rather speak of the particulars which God has wrought for you. You may say, 'At such a time, I felt a change which I am not able to express; and since that time, I have not felt pride, or self-will, or anger, or unbelief; nor any thing but a fulness of love to God and to all mankind.' And answer any other plain question that is asked, with modesty and simplicity.

"And if any of you should at any time fall from what you now are, if you should again feel pride or unbelief, or any temper from which you are now delivered; do not deny, do not hide, do not disguise it at all, at the peril of your soul. At all events, go to one in whom you can confide, and speak just what you feel. God will enable him to speak a

word in season, which shall be health to your soul. And surely He will again lift up your head, and cause the bones that have been broken to rejoice.

"38. *What is the last advice that you would give them?*

"Be exemplary in all things; particularly in outward things (as in dress), in little things, in the laying out of your money (avoiding every needless expense), in deep, steady seriousness, and in the solidity and usefulness of all your conversation. So shall you be 'a light shining in a dark place.' So shall you daily 'grow in grace,' till 'an entrance be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

"Most of the preceding advices are strongly enforced in the following reflections, which I recommend to your deep and frequent consideration, next to the Holy Scriptures: —

"(1.) The sea is an excellent figure of the fulness of God, and that of the blessed Spirit. For as the rivers all return into the sea; so the bodies, the souls, and the good works of the righteous, return into God, to live there in His eternal repose.

"Although all the graces of God depend on His mere bounty, yet is He pleased generally to attach them to the prayers, the instructions, and the holiness of those with whom we are. By strong, though invisible attractions, He draws some souls through their intercourse with others.

"The sympathies formed by grace far surpass those formed by nature.

"The truly devout show that passions as naturally flow from true as from false love, so deeply sensible are they of the goods and evils of those whom they love for God's sake. But this can only be comprehended by those who understand the language of love.

"The bottom of the soul may be in repose, even while we

are in many outward troubles; just as the bottom of the sea is calm, while the surface is strongly agitated.

"The best helps to growth in grace are the ill-usage, the affronts, and the losses which befall us. We should receive them with all thankfulness, as preferable to all others, were it only on this account, — that our will has no part therein.

"The readiest way to escape from our sufferings is to be willing they should endure as long as God pleases.

"If we suffer persecution and affliction in a right manner, we attain a larger measure of conformity to Christ, by a due improvement of one of these occasions, than we could have done merely by imitating His mercy, in abundance of good works.

"One of the greatest evidences of God's love to those that love Him is to send them afflictions, with grace to bear them.

"Even in the greatest afflictions, we ought to testify to God, that in receiving them from His hand, we feel pleasure in the midst of the pain, from being afflicted by Him who loves us, and whom we love.

"The readiest way which God takes to draw a man to Himself is to afflict him in that he loves most, and with good reason; and to cause this affliction to arise from some good action done with a single eye; because nothing can more clearly show him the emptiness of what is most lovely and desirable in the world.

"(2.) True resignation consists in a thorough conformity to the whole will of God, who wills and does all (excepting sin) which comes to pass in the world. In order to this we have only to embrace all events, good and bad, as His will.

"In the greatest afflictions which can befall the just, either from heaven or earth, they remain immovable in peace, and perfectly submissive to God, by an inward, loving regard to Him, uniting in one all the powers of their souls

"We ought quietly to suffer whatever befalls us, to bear

the defects of others and our own, to confess them to God in secret prayer, or with groans which cannot be uttered; but never to speak a sharp or peevish word, nor to murmur or repine but thoroughly willing that God should treat you in the manner that pleases Him. We are His lambs, and therefore ought to be ready to suffer, even to the death, without complaining.

"We are to bear with those we cannot amend, and to be content with offering them to God. This is true resignation. And since He has borne our infirmities, we may well bear those of each other for His sake.

"To abandon all, to strip one's self of all, in order to seek and to follow Jesus Christ naked to Bethlehem, where He was born; naked to the hall where He was scourged; and naked to Calvary, where He died on the cross, is so great a mercy, that neither the thing, nor the knowledge of it, is given to any, but through faith in the Son of God.

"(3.) There is no love of God without patience, and no patience without lowliness and sweetness of spirit.

"Humility and patience are the surest proofs of the increase of love.

"Humility alone unites patience with love, without which it is impossible to draw profit from suffering, or, indeed, to avoid complaint, especially when we think we have given no occasion for what men make us suffer.

"True humility is a kind of self-annihilation, and this is the centre of all virtues.

"A soul returned to God ought to be attentive to everything which is said to him, on the head of salvation, with a desire to profit thereby.

"Of the sins which God has pardoned, let nothing remain but a deeper humility in the heart, and a stricter regulation in our words, in our actions, and in our sufferings.

"(4.) The bearing men, and suffering evils in meekness and silence, is the sum of a Christian life.

"God is the first object of our love: its next office is, to bear the defects of others. And we should begin the practice of this amidst our own household.

"We should chiefly exercise our love toward them who most shock either our way of thinking, or our temper, or our knowledge, or the desire we have that others should be as virtuous as we wish to be ourselves.

"(5.) God hardly gives His Spirit even to those whom He has established in grace, if they do not pray for it on all occasions, not only once, but many times.

"God does nothing but in answer to prayer; and even they who have been converted to God, without praying for it themselves (which is exceeding rare), were not without the prayers of others. Every new victory which a soul gains is the effect of a new prayer.

"On every occasion of uneasiness, we should retire to prayer, that we may give place to the grace and light of God, and then form our resolutions, without being in any pain about what success they may have.

"In the greatest temptations, a single look to Christ, and the barely pronouncing His name, suffices to overcome the wicked one, so it be done with confidence and calmness of spirit.

"God's command to 'pray without ceasing,' is founded on the necessity we have of His grace to preserve the life of God in the soul, which can no more subsist one moment without it, than the body can without air.

"Whether we think of, or speak to, God, whether we act or suffer for Him, all is prayer, when we have no other object than His love, and the desire of pleasing Him.

"All that a Christian does, even in eating and sleeping, is prayer, when it is done in simplicity, according to the order of God, without either adding to or diminishing from it by his own choice.

"Prayer continues in the desire of the heart, though the understanding be employed on outward things.

"In souls filled with love, the desire to please God is a continual prayer.

"As the furious hate which the devil bears us is termed the roaring of a lion, so our vehement love may be termed crying after God.

"God only requires of His adult children, that their hearts be truly purified, and that they offer Him continually the wishes and vows that naturally spring from perfect love. For these desires, being the genuine fruits of love, are the most perfect prayers that can spring from it.

"(6.) It is scarce conceivable how straight the way is wherein God leads them that follow Him; and how dependent on Him we must be, unless we are wanting in our faithfulness to Him.

"It is hardly credible of how great consequence before God the smallest things are; and what great inconveniences sometimes follow those which appear to be light faults.

"As a very little dust will disorder a clock, and the least sand will obscure our sight, so the least grain of sin which is upon the heart will hinder its right motion toward God.

"We ought to be in the church as the saints are in heaven, and in the house as the holiest men are in the church; doing our work in the house as we pray in the church; worshipping God from the ground of the heart.

"We should be continually laboring to cut off all the useless things that surround us: and God usually retrenches the superfluities of our souls in the same proportion as we do those of our bodies.

"The best means of resisting the devil is, to destroy whatever of the world remains in us, in order to raise for God, upon its ruins, a building all of love. Then shall we

begin, in this fleeting life, to love God as we shall love Him in eternity.

"We scarce conceive how easy it is to rob God of His due, in our friendship with the most virtuous persons, until they are torn from us by death. But if this loss produce lasting sorrow, that is a clear proof that we had before two treasures, between which we divided our heart.

"(7.) If, after having renounced all, we do not watch incessantly, and beseech God to accompany our vigilance with His, we shall be again entangled and overcome.

"As the most dangerous winds may enter at little openings, so the devil never enters more dangerously than by little unobserved incidents, which seem to be nothing, yet insensibly open the heart to great temptations.

"It is good to renew ourselves from time to time, by closely examining the state of our souls, as if we had never done it before; for nothing tends more to the full assurance of faith, than to keep ourselves by this means in humility, and the exercise of all good works.

"To continual watchfulness and prayer ought to be added continual employment. For grace flies a vacuum as well as nature; and the devil fills whatever God does not fill.

"There is no faithfulness like that which ought to be between a guide of souls and the person directed by Him. They ought continually to regard each other in God, and closely to examine themselves, whether all their thoughts are pure, and all their words directed with Christian discretion. Other affairs are only the things of men; but these are peculiarly the things of God.

"(8.) The words of St. Paul, 'No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost,' show us the necessity of eyeing God in our good works, and even in our minutest thoughts; knowing that none are pleasing to Him, but those which He forms in us and with us. From hence we learn

that we cannot serve Him, unless He use our tongue, hands, and heart, to do by Himself and His Spirit whatever He would have us to do.

"If we were not utterly impotent, our good works would be our own property; whereas now they belong wholly to God, because they proceed from Him and His grace: while raising our works, and making them all Divine, He honors Himself in us through them.

"One of the principal rules of religion is, to lose no occasion of serving God. And, since He is invisible to our eyes, we are to serve Him in our neighbor; which He receives as if done to Himself in person, standing visibly before us.

"God does not love men that are inconstant, nor good works that are intermitted. Nothing is pleasing to Him, but what has a resemblance of His own immutability.

"A constant attention to the work which God entrusts us with is a mark of solid piety.

"Love fasts when it can, and as much as it can. It leads to all the ordinances of God, and employs itself in all the outward works whereof it is capable. It flies, as it were, like Elijah over the plain, to find God upon His holy mountain.

"God is so great, that He communicates greatness to the least thing that is done for His service.

"Happy are they who are sick, yea, or lose their life, for having done a good work.

"God frequently conceals the part which His children have in the conversion of other souls. Yet one may boldly say, that person who long groans before Him for the conversion of another, whenever that soul is converted to God, is one of the chief causes of it.

"Charity cannot be practiced right, unless, First, we exercise it the moment God gives the occasion; and, Secondly, retire the instant after to offer it to God by humble thanks-

giving. And this for three reasons: First, to render Him what we have received from Him. The Second, to avoid the dangerous temptation which springs from the very goodness of these works. And the Third, to unite ourselves to God, in whom the soul expands itself in prayer, with all the graces we have received, and the good works we have done, to draw from Him new strength against the bad effects which these very works may produce in us, if we do not make use of the antidotes which God has ordained against these poisons. The true means to be filled anew with the riches of grace is thus to strip ourselves of it; and without this it is extremely difficult not to grow faint in the practice of good works.

"Good works do not receive their last perfection, till they, as it were, lose themselves in God. This is a kind of death to them, resembling that of our bodies, which will not attain their highest life, their immortality, till they lose themselves in the glory of our souls, or rather of God, wherewith they shall be filled. And it is only what they had of earthly and mortal, which good works lose by this spiritual death.

"Fire is the symbol of love; and the love of God is the principle and the end of all our good works. But truth surpasses figure; and the fire of Divine love has this advantage over material fire, that it can reascend to its source, and raise thither with it all the good works which it produces. And by this means it prevents their being corrupted by pride, vanity, or any evil mixture. But this cannot be done otherwise than by making these good works in a spiritual manner die in God, by a deep gratitude, which plunges the soul in Him as in an abyss, with all that it is, and all the grace and works for which it is indebted to Him a gratitude, whereby the soul seems to empty itself of them, that they may return to their source, as rivers seem willing to empty themselves, when they pour themselves with all their waters into the sea.

When we have received any favor from God, we ought to retire, if not into our closets, into our hearts, and say, 'I come, Lord, to restore to Thee what Thou hast given; and I freely relinquish it, to enter again into my own nothingness. For what is the most perfect creature in heaven or earth in Thy presence, but a void capable of being filled with Thee and by Thee; as the air which is void and dark, is capable of being filled with the light of the sun, who withdraws it every day to restore it the next, there being nothing in the air that either appropriates this light or resists it? O give me the same facility of receiving and restoring Thy grace and good works! I say, *Thine;* for I acknowledge the root from which they spring is in Thee, and not in me.'"

Propositions Written in 1764.

26. In the year 1764, upon a review of the whole subject, I wrote down the sum of what I had observed in the following short propositions: —

"(1.) There is such a thing as perfection; for it is again and again mentioned in Scripture.

"(2.) It is not so early as justification; for justified persons are to 'go on unto perfection,' Heb. vi. 1.

"(3.) It is not so late as death; for St. Paul speaks of living men that were perfect, Phil. iii. 15.

"(4.) It is not absolute. Absolute perfection belongs not to man, nor to angels, but to God alone.

"(5.) It does not make a man infallible; none is infallible, while he remains in the body.

"(6.) Is it sinless? It is not worth while to contend for a term. It is 'salvation from sin.'

"(7.) It is 'perfect love,' 1 John iv. 18. This is the essence of it; its properties, or inseparable fruits, are, rejoic-

ing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in every thing giving thanks, 1 Thess. v. 16, etc.

(8.) It is improvable. It is so far from lying in an indivisible point, from being incapable of increase, that one perfected in love may grow in grace far swifter than he did before.

"(9.) It is amissible, capable of being lost; of which we have numerous instances. But we were not thoroughly convinced of this, till five or six years ago.

"(10.) It is constantly both preceded and followed by a gradual work.

"(11.) But is it in itself instantaneous or not? In examining this, let us go on step by step.

"An instantaneous change has been wrought in some believers. None can deny this.

"Since that change, they enjoy perfect love; they feel this, and this alone; they 'rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks.' Now this is all that I mean by perfection; therefore, these are witnesses of the perfection which I preach.

"'But in some, this change was not instantaneous.' They did not perceive the instant when it was wrought. It is often difficult to perceive the instant when a man dies; yet there is an instant in which life ceases. And if even sin ceases, there must be a last moment of its existence, and a first moment of our deliverance from it.

"'But if they have this love now, they will lose it.' They may; but they need not. And whether they do or no, they have it now; they now experience what we teach. They now are all love; they now rejoice, pray, and praise without ceasing.

"'However sin is only suspended in them; it is not destroyed.' Call it which you please. They are all love to day; and they take no thought for the morrow.

"'But this doctrine has been much abused.' So has that of justification by faith. But that is no reason for giving up either this or any other Scriptural doctrine. 'When you wash your child,' as one speaks, 'throw away the water; but do not throw away the child.'

"'But those who think they are saved from sin, say they have no need of the merits of Christ.' They say just the contrary. Their language is,—

'Every moment, Lord, I want, the merit of Thy death!'

"They never before had so deep, so unspeakable a conviction of the need of Christ in all His offices, as they have now.

"Therefore, all our preachers should make a point of preaching perfection to believers, constantly, strongly and explicitly; and all believers should mind this one thing, and continually agonize for it."

Conclusion.

27. I have now done what I proposed. I have given a plain and simple account of the manner wherein I first received the doctrine of perfection, and the sense wherein I received, and wherein I do receive, and teach it to this day. I have declared the whole and every part of what I mean by that Scriptural expression. I have drawn the picture of it at full length, without either disguise or covering.

And I would now ask any impartial person, What is there so frightful therein? Whence is all this outcry, which, for these twenty years and upwards, has been made throughout the kingdom; as if all Christianity were destroyed, and all religion torn up by the roots? Why is it, that the very name of perfection has been cast out of the mouths of Christians; yea, exploded and abhorred, as if it contained the most pernicious heresy? Why have the preachers of it been hooted at, like mad dogs, even by men that fear God; nay,

and by some of their own children, some whom they, under God, had begotten through the Gospel? What reason is there for this, or what pretence? Reason, sound reason, there is none. It is impossible there should. But pretences there are, and those in great abundance. Indeed, there is ground to fear that, with some who treat us thus, it is mere pretense; that it is no more than a copy of their countenance. from the beginning to the end. They wanted, they sought occasion against me; and here they found what they sought. "This is Mr. Wesley's doctrine! He preaches perfection!" He does; yet this is not his doctrine, any more than it is yours, or any one's else, that is a minister of Christ. For it is His doctrine, peculiarly, emphatically his; it is the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Those are His words, not mine: "Ye shall therefore be perfect, as your Father who is in heaven, is perfect." And who says, ye shall not; or at least, not till your soul is separated from the body?

It is the doctrine of St. Paul, the doctrine of St. James, of St. Peter, and St. John; and no otherwise Mr. Wesley's, than as it is the doctrine of every one who preaches the pure and the whole Gospel. I tell you, as plain as I can speak, where and when I found this. I found it in the oracles of God, in the Old and New Testament; when I read them with no other view or desire, but to save my own soul. But whosesoever this doctrine is, I pray you, what harm is there in it?

Look at it again; survey it on every side, and that with the closest attention. In one view, it is purity of intention, dedicating all the life to God. It is the giving God all our heart; it is one desire and design ruling all our tempers. It is the devoting, not a part, but all, our soul, body, and substance, to God. In another view, it is all the mind which was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ walked. It is the circumcision of the heast from all filthiness, all

inward as well as outward pollution. It is a renewal of the heart in the whole image of God, the full likeness of Him that created it. In yet another, it is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. Now, take it in which of these views you please (for there is no material difference), and this is the whole and sole perfection, as a train of writings prove to a demonstration, which I have believed and taught for these forty years, from the year 1725 to the year 1765.

28. Now let this perfection appear in its native form, and who can speak one word against it? Will any dare to speak against loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves? against a renewal of heart, not only in part, but in the whole image of God? Who is he that will open his mouth against being cleansed from all pollution both of flesh and spirit; or against having all the mind that was in Christ, and walking in all things as Christ walked? What man, who calls himself a Christian, has the hardiness to object to the devoting, not a part, but all our soul, body, and substance to God? What serious man would oppose the giving God all our heart, and the having one desire ruling all our tempers? I say again, let this Christian perfection appear in its own shape, and who will fight against it? It must be *disguised* before it can be *opposed.* It must be *covered* with a bearskin first, or even the wild beasts of the people will scarce be induced to *worry* it.

But whatever these do, let not the children of God any longer fight against the image of God. Let not the members of Christ say anything against the whole mind that was in Christ. Let not those who are alive to God oppose the dedicating all our life to Him. Why should *you* who have His love shed abroad in your heart, withstand the giving Him all your heart? Does not all that is within you cry out, 'Oh, what that loves can love enough?' What

pity that those who desire and design to please Him should have any other design or desire! Much more that they should dread, as a fatal delusion, yea, abhor as an abomination to God, the having this one desire and design ruling every temper!

Why should devout men be afraid of devoting all their soul, body, and substance to God? Why should those who love Christ count it a damnable error to think we may have all the mind that was in Him? We allow, we contend, that we are *justified freely* through the righteousness and the blood of Christ.

(And why are you so hot against us, because we expect likewise to be *sanctified wholly* through His Spirit?) We look for no favor either from the open servants of sin, or from those who have only the form of religion. (But how long will you who worship God in spirit, who are "circumcised with the circumcision not made with hands," set your battle in array against those who seek an entire *circumcision of heart*, who thirst to be cleansed *from all filthiness of flesh and spirit* and to *perfect holiness in the fear of God?*)

(Are we your enemies because we look for a full deliverance from the *carnal mind which is enmity against God?* Nay, we are your brethren, your fellow-laborers in the vineyard of our Lord, your companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus.) Although this we confess (if we are fools therein, yet as fools bear with us), we expect to love God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. Yea, we do believe that He will in this world so "cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit, that we shall perfectly love Him, and worthily magnify His holy name." — *Works*, vol. vi. p. 483.

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